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MY WIFE AND I.

BY TENNYSON.

As through the land at eve we went,
And plucked the ripened ears,
We fell out, my wife and I;
We fell out—I know not why—
And kissed again with tears.

And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears—
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There, above the little grave—
Oh, there, above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

A Thief in the Candle.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOUBLE CUNNING," "UNDER WILD SKIES," "ALONG THE LINE," "BENEATH THE SEA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—(CONTINUED.)

"OH, I say, do get ready, Miss Gracie," said Jack, who was trying to fashion a fan out a piece of firewood. "I want to see the guv'nor at home again; 'taint natural without him here."

"But, Jack, I am so puzzled," she cried.

"What 'bout, miss?"

"Whether to go or stay?"

"Well, I am!" exclaimed Jack, in his astonishment. "Just hark at her. What, don't you want the guv'nor again?"

"Oh, Jack!"

"Of course you does. Well, then, go and put on your things, and lets go."

In a case of indecision like this, when the girl's will was in the balance, the energetic desire Jack had to get his master free once more was sufficient to bear down the beam on the one side favorable to Mr. Devick's plans.

Gracie felt the peculiar shrinking more than ever, and as if she ought to have good advice before taking such a step; but, on the other hand, affection, and the excitement of the moment, were too much for the prudent shrinking, and though there was a remnant of hesitation left, it was overset by the boy's hot, earnest ways.

"Why, any one 'd think you didn't care a bit," he said.

"Oh, Jack, you know better," she then cried; "I can't help thinking I ought not to go."

"Why, shan't I be along with you?" he said, loftily.

Gracie smiled, but at the same time there was, she felt, something in what he said. The boy would be with her, and even such an escort as that was very much better than none.

"I'll get ready directly, Jack," she cried.

"That's right, miss; look sharp."

"I won't be many minutes, Jack, but I must change my dress," she said, and hurried out of the room.

Gracie's few minutes altogether meant thirty, for a natural feeling of coquetry made her wish to appear at her best.

Mr. Devick was their landlord, and a wealthy man, whom she felt she must not disgrace by going in her everyday shabby dress and bonnet, and the consequence was that as she appeared at last before Jack—who had just met with an accident, and cut his finger—the boy exclaimed, as he quickly bound a handkerchief round about the injury, and thrust his hand into his pocket—

"Oh! I say, Miss Gracie, you do look stunning!"

She did not answer him, but signed to him to go on in front; and after locking the door, she followed the custom that was established at their house—placing the key under the door-mat ready for her mother if she came home, which was not probable—and went after the boy into the street.

"Let's walk fast, Jack," she said, all excitement, now; and in due time the quiet-looking house in Counter street was reached.

"Which is the place, Jack?" she said, as they passed one open doorway, within which Barnet Gedge was standing, smoking.

"That's it, 'crost the way there, down t' the bottom nearly, with the iron railings all round, and the brass plate on the door."

"What a gloomy-looking house," said Grace, involuntarily, as her eye ran over the dirty windows and heavy, despondent look of the place.

"Ah! but you just wait till you get inside!" the boy said. "It's very beautiful there."

Again the shrinking sensation came over Grace Robson, and she hesitated.

"Let's walk past a little way, Jack," she said.

"Walk past, Miss Gracie?"

"Yes," she replied, in a hesitating way. "I'm not quite ready yet."

They walked by, and down the first turning, and again along the next making a tour about Devick's place, Jack whistling, with his cut hand in his pocket, and looking askance at his companion, as he said to himself—

"What cowards gals is!"

Meanwhile Grace was taking herself to task for her weakness, and telling herself that, situated as she was, she must be more strong-minded and better able to fight the battle of life.

"It is weak and childish in me," she said, half passionately.

"What say, Miss Grace?"

"I was talking to myself, Jack."

"Oh!" said the boy; and he whistled 'Jim Crow,' the popular air of his day, a little more loudly.

"What a weak, foolish girl I am," said Gracie, this time inaudibly. "It is contemptible to shrink like this when I might be helping him and placing him in a more independent position than that of taking aid from Mr. Brand."

The thought of her family being under an obligation to Frank Brand was the spur that urged her on at last, for it brought the tears of vexation into her eyes as she clenched her little hand angrily.

"I could not bear it," she thought. "It would be like buying me."

"Hadn't we better go now, Miss Gracie?" said Jack, looking at her agitated face wistfully.

"Yes, Jack; in another minute. Walk down this street first."

"All right, miss."

"Don't take any notice of me there's a good boy. I am a little upset by this trouble."

"All right, Miss Gracie, I won't look at you: but let's make haste and get the guv'nor out. He said we was all going to be well off now."

Barnet Gedge, who had been much exercised in his mind, and who had grinned from his hiding-place as he saw Grace Robson pass the house and go out of sight, suddenly caught sight of the couple again returning from the opposite direction, and shrank back in the entry, uttering a low, savage growl, like a wild beast.

"Well, 'tain't my fault," he said; "I can't go and pull her away. I must do what he wants. I warned him to take care on her, and I've done. Poor gal!"

He drew a long breath through his pipe, and emitted a tremendous cloud of smoke, watching Gracie and her companion, who trotted by her side like a dog, approach the entrance of the trap.

"She's a-going by again," said Jack to himself. "My, what a cowrd! I'm glad I aint a gal!"

Jack was wrong, for after making a stern effort of repression, Grace suddenly turned up to the door of Devick's house and gave a trembling knock.

There was no response, and the poor girl's courage began to ebb away.

She dared not look round, or down the street, for she felt that there must be people at every window watching her and guessing the object of her visit there.

"Do you think they heard the knock, Jack?" faltered Grace.

"No," cried the boy; "you give such a little 'un. Let me come; I'll wake them up."

"No, no, Jack!" she cried, excitedly, as the boy made at the knocker. "Let me knock again."

She laid her hand upon the iron ring, and kept it there without attempting to raise it, but more to keep the boy from making some thoughtless attack upon the door, and all the while she listened for footsteps within.

Jack began to whistle 'Jim Crow' again rather loudly, as he looked wonderingly at his companion, and once more congratulated himself that he was not born a girl.

"They didn't hear it," he said at last. "Give it a good hard double 'un, Miss Gracie; you ought!"

There was time left to go and flee, she thought, as she started at the boy's words. Perhaps there was danger to her beyond that dark door, and something within her seemed to whisper—

"Go back!"

But she forced the dread away again, as being too childish for heed, and whispering the word "father," raised the knocker again, and struck harder.

Her heart sank as she heard the hollow reverberation within, the sound seeming to be repeated; and a cold hand had in imagination, gripped her sinking heart, and made her knees tremble, as she envied the coolness of the boy at her side.

"That'll fetch 'em!" he said, laughing. "I say, Miss Gracie, she is such a stiff-looking one."

"Who is?" said Gracie, in a choking voice.

"The woman—the lady—Mrs. Devick, I suppose."

Jack did not know it, but if he had striven for a week he could not have spoken words that would have given Grace Robson comfort as was contained in that last speech.

They at once knew very little of Devick's household.

He was a stern task-master, and rather mysterious in his way of living; that was all Gracie knew; and save that she had an instinctive fear that she might have found favor in his eyes, she was in a profound state of ignorance.

But now Jack had spoken of a woman—of Mrs. Devick; and the color came into her pale cheeks as she blushed for shame at the vague, troublous thoughts which had filled her breast.

She was changed now, and there was a look of calm confidence in her eyes as she raised them, that the door was being opened, fully expectant of meeting the countenance of some grave middle-aged female.

She did not even start when she saw that the door was thrown back by Devick, whose dark eyes gave forth a glance of triumph, though the countenance remained unchanged.

"Oh! it is you, Miss Robson," he said, coldly—speaking as if he had fully expected some one else. "I thought it was my solicitor. Step in, please."

He drew back, and a chill came over Grace as she entered and the great door was closed behind her.

As it closed Barnet Gedge dashed down his short clay pipe with a savage oath, and came out of the entry.

"Well," he growled. "It's no business of mine, and I warned 'em."

He went slowly off, and, making his way to the nearest stand, secured one of the heavy old lumbering cabs that were taking the place of the pair-horse hackney coaches, mounted the box to the driver's side, and told him where to drive.

* * * * * *

CAUGHT!

The dread that was beginning to chill Grace Robson passed off again as Devick just glanced at her, and then walked on towards the library door and spoke in a quiet, abrupt manner—

"Come in, Miss Robson. Here, boy, you can sit down there. Or, no," he added, as if upon second thoughts, "you may as well come in."

He threw open the double doors and held them back in order for his visitors to pass, closed them carefully, and gave Grace fresh confidence, as, instead of making the slightest polite advance, he said shortly—

"Sit down, please—both of you. Excuse me for a few minutes, Miss Robson. Business letter."

He nodded towards them, and, taking no further notice, went round his table and sat down.

"Bad business this about your father," he said, abruptly.

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Devick," Grace answered; "and I——"

"Don't talk to me, please, for a few minutes," said Devick, shortly, and he began to write.

It was on Grace's lips to say, "I beg your pardon," but she did not speak, only sat down with a sigh of relief. Everything was so different from what in her vague terror she had pictured.

She turned to Jack and smiled at him, making the boy respond with a grin and a wink, as with a pantomimic gesture he tried to draw Gracie's attention to the well-filled shelves and the rich carpet and hangings.

"Ain't they nice?" he whispered.

Grace held up hand to the boy to be silent, and he hitched himself back in his chair, began to swing his legs alternately to and fro, so that they crossed and recrossed, and taking his injured hand from his pocket he began to slowly unroll the dirty handkerchief, which was deeply stained with blood, and examined the cut upon his finger.

And all the time as Grace looked timidly about her Devick was quite forcing himself to go on writing for form's sake; and, to give Grace perfect confidence in his intentions, went on scratch, scratch, scratch, and as he wrote he almost involuntarily formed a few incoherent sentences—

"At last, at last, my darling—I have you here, safely in my hands—and I will teach you to love me—so that, even if friends come, you shall cling to me—and bid me let you stay; mine—mine—for ever!"

He pressed his teeth and his lips together and frowned, as he kept his eyes half closed, engaging in a silent fight with himself to force down the suggestions of the hot blood that danced and throbbed in his veins, and bade him catch Grace in his arms, and say such words as those he wrote.

But he knew that he must not alarm the soft little dove he had trapped within his cage, and, with the firm repression of a scheming man whose life had been one long

war against society, he went on writing those words again and again.

And as the pen scratched, Grace grew more confident, and found herself wondering whatever Mr. Devick was writing—to some one who was a debtor, like her father, and whether he was as stern towards him; whether the poor debtor had a daughter who would be sent for to go and free her father.

One way and another, she grew more calm and contented, and watched Devick, thinking that, after all, he could not be a bad man, only stern and exacting in his business.

Jack Dee had his thoughts too, not very comfortable ones, as he unrolled his cut finger and examined the cut, and told himself it had bled a jolly lot.

Then he tied it up once more, but it smarted, and he undid it again, and recalled how boys told one another who had cut hands or fingers that they would die after it.

Then he felt uneasy, and began thinking about how he once heard tell of a boy who cut himself with his pocket-knife, right down between his finger and thumb, and that he had locked-jaw after it, and then the doctor had to take out one of his front teeth, so as to make a hole through which to pour in milk and beef-tea.

That boy, according to the story, died; and Jack began to wish that he had not cut himself, and wondered whether he would have locked-jaw, and have a big tooth pulled out of the front, and be fed with milk and beef-tea through a pipe.

It was very horrible, but he began to comfort himself directly.

"I don't believe it's true," he said to himself, with hardened scepticism. "It's only a little bit of a wound, and I'm going to be a soldier, and have got to get used to having wounds. Soldiers has legs and arms cut right off and big chops made in them with swords, but I never heard of a soldier having locked-jaw."

Jack had just arrived at this stage of his musings, eagerly watching his cut all the time, and wondering how long it would take to heal, when Devick's pen suddenly ceased scratching, and as he turned the sheet of paper and began to rub it on the blotting leaf, he said, sharply—

"Now, then, business."

Jack started, and thrust his stained pocket-handkerchief into his ragged blouse pocket, in happy unconsciousness that he had long ceased to have anything nearer a pocket there than a hole, and the consequence was that the handkerchief slipped through.

"That's done," said Devick, as he folded the paper and thrust it into a drawer. "Now, Miss Robson, your boy here tells me that your father has at last made a successful experiment."

"My father fully believes so, sir," said Grace, rising.

"Sit still, Miss Robson—sit still," said Devick, looking away from her and talking to the book-shelves, as he kept on tapping the points of his white fingers together. "Well, this boy made out such a good case that on the strength of your father's full belief—very wise and right of you, my dear young lady, to speak so guardedly—I am disposed to say that he really ought not to be kept in that dreadful place."

"Oh, Mr. Devick!"

"Hush, hush, please!" he said. "No thanks. I ought to apologize to you; but the fact is, I am so busy that I am obliged to leave matters of debts to my solicitor, and he pushed your poor father's affair on further than I intended. I am very sorry, Miss Robson; but lawyers never have no hearts."

Grace flushed and turned pale, and looked at Devick imploringly.

"Well, it's a bad job," continued Devick, coolly; "but it's no use crying over spilt milk; we must make what amends we can and get him out."

"Oh! Mr. Devick, if you only know how grateful I shall be!" cried Grace, rising again.

"Tut, tut, tut, tut! my dear child. Not another word. Only the worst of it is, it is easier to get a man locked up than to set him free."

"Ah!"

"Don't be alarmed, we can do it. You don't understand these things; but there are papers to get signed, orders of discharge made, and the lawyers have to manage all these matters. My solicitor was to have been here or at the prison. As he has not come here, I daresay he will have gone on there."

Grace bowed, and looked anxious.

"Poor fellow! of course, he must be longing to be free. Let me see; did you not say that Mrs. Robson had gone to the prison, boy?"

"Yes, sir," said Jack.

"So much the better; as she is there, my dear child, perhaps you had better not come too."

He glanced as her sidewise as he spoke.

"Oh, Mr. Devick!"

"It would be a painful thing for you to go to such a place," he said deprecatingly.

"It is to bring my father away, sir!" she said, proudly.

"Yes, yes, to be sure; so it is. Very brave of you, Miss Robson. Well," he added, rising, "I don't think we'll wait any longer for my solicitor. We'll take a cab and drive there."

"Let me say one word of thanks, Mr. Devick!" cried Grace, whose agitation mastered her as Devick came round the table.

"No, no, no, no; not a word!" he said, sharply, as he gazed in the sweet face, over which the tears were streaming. "Good girl! Your father ought to be very, very proud."

Grace caught his hand as he stood near her, and hastily, as she bent over it, pressed it to her lips.

That was too much.

In spite of the boy's presence, in another instant Devick would have caught her in his arms; but at that moment, as his hands were rising to clasp her, he caught sight of something on the floor, and turning ghastly white, he stepped aside, caught it up, and was shudderingly trying to thrust it away when Jack, who had no more veneration in his head than an oyster might possess, dashed at the object of Devick's horror, and caught it, and held on.

"Hold hard!" he cried; "that there's my han'kerchy."

"No! Silence, sir! I——"

"But I say it is! Didn't I cut my hand, Miss Grace, and tie it up? The han'kerchy slipped through this here hole."

"Oh, I see!" said Devick, hastily forcing a smile; but the color would not come back to his livid face and white lips. "Hide it away, boy. What a thing for a young lady to see!"

"Why, it's on'y blood!" said Jack. "Who minds seeing a drop o' blood?"

Devick shuddered again, in spite of himself, but he hid his emotion, and went out into the hall, and returned with his hat, after listening to see if all was quiet upstairs, and satisfying himself that he was not watched.

"Now, Miss Robson," he said; "let me see, though, we shall want these papers."

He went to the table, and took up a packet tied with red tape.

"Your father's affairs," he said, thrusting the packet into his breast. "Now, then, please; perhaps we may have to drive to my solicitor's, after all."

He drew back quite distantly for Grace to pass out into the gloomy hall. Jack followed, and Devick then closed both doors of the library and joined them.

"One moment, though," he said, as if struck by a sudden thought, "we can't have you in the cab my man; you are rather too bad."

"Yes, I am a ragged 'un, ain't I, sir?" said Jack, grinning and smoothing his hair. "But never you mind about me; I can cut behind."

"No, no, no, my man; that won't do," said Devick; "it is not respectable."

He was drawing on a pair of lavender kid gloves as he spoke, and had already donned his glossy silk hat.

"Look here, you can run on; take the short cuts, and you will get there before us."

"All right, sir," said Jack, grinning, and not seeing the shade of uneasiness in Grace's face.

"Stop, stop, don't be in such a hurry!" said Devick; "don't you go in and see Mr. Robson till we come. You understand. It is to be a surprise for him."

"All right, sir; I won't tell him."

"And take this," said Devick, handing him a shilling. "Call at a chemist's shop and buy some sticking plaster for your hand."

"All right, sir."

"Then be off," said Devick, as he opened the door.

It was on Grace's lips to cry "stay" to her protector; but she fought against what she called the foolish fear.

If Devick had shown the slightest disposition to detain her at the house, she would have started from him, but his plans were too well made.

He turned to her as Jack hesitated, half rendered suspicious by a troubled look in Grace's eye, and said, quickly—

"Please go out first, Miss Robson the cab is waiting."

She stepped out, and he slammed the door, and just then Harriet Gedge opened the cab, and Devick offered her his arm.

She could not help a shivering sensation as she took it and suffered herself to be led down to the cab, when Jack, who had gone a few yards, darted back and held his arm over the wheel to protect her dress.

"What, not gone, boy!" said Devick, good-humoredly.

"Just off, sir. All right, Miss Grace; I'll be there first," cried Jack, and then he paused as Devick followed and placed his bag on the seat.

Gedge raised the folding steps and closed the door with a bang.

"Drive to Whitecross street prison," said Devick, kindly.

"Right! Whoo—oop," cried Jack to himself; and he set off, turning a corner before Gedge had climbed heavily to his seat beside the driver, and the horse started at a lumbering trot.

There was no timorous jealous face looked over the blinds or from behind a curtain at Devick's house, as the cab rolled away, with Grace Robson's heart beating as fast as Devick's, while he dared not trust himself to look at his prisoner or speak.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STAB IN THE HEART.

"IT is impossible," whispered Brand. "The man is only doing his duty. Come back to your wife and the boy."

"Better get help," said one turnkey to the other. "He's mad."

"No, no!" said the young doctor, slipping half a sovereign in the man's hand. "Terrible news came. I am a doctor. He will calm down now."

Brand took Robson's arm and led him through the little crowd to where Mrs. Robson stood half fainting and clinging to Jack.

"Keep back please," said Brand, sternly, as the occupants of the prison crowded round.

"Like to step in here, p'r'aps," said the turnkey, kindly, and he led the way into his lodge, where he left the little party in peace.

"Brand," panted Robson, "I shall go mad. I dreaded this. Help me, man."

"Help you?" said Brand, with a curious look in his ghastly face.

"Yes. Do you not love my child? That scoundrel! Here—the boy—Jack—tell me—speak out!"

Half sulkily at first, but warming up afterwards, the boy told all he had to tell, and as he listened the strange look on Frank Brand's countenance gave place to one full of rage.

"She—Miss Grace—did not go at Mr. Devick's invitation, boy?" cried Robson, excitedly.

"No, master, she went 'cause I wanted her to," cried Jack.

"You persuaded her?"

"Yes, master; and she wouldn't go at first and went by the place because she was afraid to go in; but I told her old Devick said if she'd go there he'd go on with her to the prison and fetch you out."

Frank Brand turned his back and walked to the chimney-piece, where he stood resting his head upon his hand, listening to the boy, who suddenly caught his master by the sleeve.

"But they must ha' come, sir—they must ha' come!" he cried, in a voice full of nervous trepidation.

"Come? Here?" groaned Robson. "No, Jack, no. He never meant to bring her here."

"Don't master—don't say as he's sold me!" cried the boy, excitedly; "don't say as I've let him take me in like that!"

Robson shook his head.

"Why don't yer speak?" cried the boy, in a shrill treble. "Don't say as I've been such a silly old soft as to let him do me like that!"

"Jack, boy, you have done me such an injury as you can never repair," groaned Robson.

"But tell me!" cried Jack, seizing him by the coat and dragging at it, "are you sure as he won't come?"

"As sure as I am living," said Robson, as if to himself.

"And you all on you stands like that!" cried Jack, in a fierce, shrill voice, "Think I'm going to let him serve us all like that, with his cheating and tricking, and not find out where he has took Miss Grace! Here, come on, some on you!"

"Yes, my lad," cried Brand, "I'll come with you! Mr. Robson, such things as this cannot be done with impunity in London city. Before night you shall have some news. Mrs. Robson, you must not stay here. She may reach home after all, and you must be there."

"Yes, wife; he is right!" said Robson, excitedly. "You must go."

"As for you, Mr. Robson, I did not mean to speak, but my solicitor is busy over your case; the debt will be paid, and you will be set at liberty before many hours are passed. Now, my boy, come on!"

Jack wanted no telling, but passed on first till they were outside the prison, when Brand caught him by the arm.

"Now, my lad!" he cried, "before I go to the police I shall call at this man's house. Tell me first all about how they came away."

"In a cab, sir!" cried Jack, excitedly. "I wasn't going to come away till I see Miss Gracie right in the cab, and see it start."

"Did you see the number of the cab, my lad?"

"No, sir; I didn't look; I wish I had."

"Was there anything you could tell it by? Did you notice the driver?"

"No," replied the boy; "but old Barny Gedge was with it."

"Who is he?"

"Oh! only old Barny, as hangs about and comes to our place sometimes to ask for old Devick."

"Not with messages to——"

Frank Brand checked the horrible suspicion, and bit his lip till the blood came.

"Messages to master, sir? No; when he comes it's to see if old Devick's been to our place."

"Do you know where this man lives?"

"Yes; he generally sleeps at a place in Meredith street; but he won't be there; I see him on the box when the cab started."

"Let us go on, then, to Devick's."

"Yes; come on!" cried the boy. "Can't you run?"

"Yes, boy, I can run," said Brand; "but we shall do no good by running. I'll hail the first cab, and we must be prepared for a long chase I'm afraid."

Directly after a cab was hailed, and as Brand got in he signed to the boy to follow, checking him as he was climbing on the box beside the driver.

"Come in here, boy," he said.

"What! in there, sir?"

"Yes, quick! I want to talk to you."

Jack hesitated, rubbed his hands down his sides, and then sprang in.

"Counter street he lives in," answered Jack, as the doctor questioned him as to Devick's abode. Then the driver received his orders; and the boy had a battle to keep down his satisfaction at riding in what was to him a superior carriage, and also keep alive his wrath at having been, as he expressed it, "done by that there Devick."

Jack had a great deal to tell about his thought that he was, as he said, "doing master a good turn;" but as the boy kept on feeling the cushions, and leaning back hard "to try how soft it was," his narrative lacked interest to Frank Brand, save where it dealt with Grace's part of the adventure.

For Brand told himself that it was contemptible on his part to be suspicious, and to allow such thoughts entrance to his brain as would keep tempting him from his faith.

"Why, I telled you that twice afore!" cried Jack, impatiently. "She wouldn't ha' thought o' going if it hadn't been for me. I know, sir."

"You know what, my boy?"

"I know, sir. It was a precious old cab, and the springs is broke or the wheels come off, and they've had a acciden'. That's what's the reason why they hadn't got to the prison. Ha, ha, ha! Ain't we been making a fuss about nothing?"

"You think that, boy?" cried Brand, clinging to the straw offered to him.

"To be sure I do, sir. Oh my, though! I hope no one ain't hurt. Here! Hi!" cried the boy, thrusting his head out of the window. "You're a-going by the house. That's it, with the big knocker on the door. Why, there they are, come back! There's the cab!"

"Come back?" cried Brand, as the man checked his horse and waited for the driver of another cab to draw away from the kerb.

"No," said Jack, "no. That ain't the cab. It was a bigger one than that, and the 'orse wasn't the same color, and it's another driver. Why, o' course! t'other cab broke down, and they came back in this."

During this time the cabs had changed places, and Brand leaped out, followed by the boy, and thundered at the door.

"I shouldn't wonder if auntie's here," said Jack. "She comes often enough to char. Yes," he said, as he stood with his head against the door. "I can hear her. She most always shuffles one foot on the floor."

There was a rattle of a chain being put up, and then the door was opened a short distance, and the washed-out face of little Polly Dee appeared, looking half scared—then wholly as she caught sight of Jack.

"Oh, Jack, Jack!" she cried, what have you been a-doin' of now?"

"Yah! Get out!" cried Jack, indignantly.

"Is Mr. Devick in?" said Brand, sharply.

"No, sir."

"Who is here?"

"Nobody, sir, but missus."

"Is not Miss Robson?"

"Here, sir? Gracious! no," cried the woman, excitedly.

"Tell your mistress I must see her directly!" said Brand.

"I don't think she'll see comp'ny, sir," said the little woman; "but I will go and ask."

She gave a sharp look at Jack, and her lips moved, but she dared not stay, and, closing the door, she left the visitors on the step, and Brand gave one foot an impatient stamp.

"The old gal might ha' letted us in," said Jack, half to himself, and he began to whistle softly as Brand strove hard to curb his impatience.

It was not kept long upon the strain, for Polly returned, the chain was heard to rattle down, the door was opened, and Polly said—

"Missus is very much engaged, sir, but she'll see you for a minute."

They entered the gloomy hall, the door was closed after them, and Polly led the way to the stairs, but turned sharply round as she found that Jack was following.

"Just you go back, sir, and wait in the hall!" she cried. "The idea!"

Jack looked at Brand, who signed to him to stay behind, and the boy went back and threw himself impatiently into a chair, which made a hollow, scooping sound upon the stone floor, while Brand followed the little charwoman to the drawing-room, and was ushered in.

"Mrs. Devick?" said Brand, as soon as they were left alone, and he had grasped the fact that the woman had probably just come in from the cab that had been at the door, for she still wore her long mantle, and her bonnet was upon the table.

She bowed haughtily, and pointed to a chair.

"To what may I attribute this visit?"

"I wish to know, first how long Mr. Devick will be?"

"It is impossible to say. He may return directly. He may be days or weeks. I know nothing of his movements."

"Are you aware that a young lady came here this morning?"

She raised her eyebrows slightly before speaking.

"Yes."

"And that she left here in a cab?"

"Yes."

"Ostensibly to go to Whitecross street Prison?"

"Well, sir, and of what interest is this to me?"

"Probably none, madam," said Brand, quickly, as he watched the play of her countenance and tried to gain information therefrom. "But it may be of great interest to her friends, who are exceedingly anxious on her behalf."

"Is the young lady missing, then?"

"Missing? No; but we are apprehensive lest some accident may have occurred. Kindly tell me what you know."

"May I ask whom I have the honor of addressing?"

"Frank Brand, surgeon, madam, the medical attendant of Mr. Robson's family, and their friend," he added, impressively. "You know, of course, that Miss Robson went out this morning with Mr. Devick?"

"I know nothing of Mr Devick's affairs," she said, coldly. "I have been from home. You see I have just returned."

Brand bent his head.

"You are fencing with me, madam," he said. "I will not fence with you, but speak plainly, and tell you that I came to you first—or, rather, I came to this house first—to see if I had reasonable people to deal

with, before I placed the matter in the hands of the police."

She did not respond for a few moments, and he fancied, that she winced at the mention of the police.

"Come, madam," he said, "be frank with me, and tell me what you know. It is a matter of life and death to us; for Heaven's sake speak, and give me some clue to Miss Robson's whereabouts."

Frank Brand thought that he was speaking in a calm, business-like tone, but his look, his manner, and the manifest agitation he suffered were sufficient to betray his secret, and the keen woman of the world, whose wits were sharpened by the strange life she led, read him like a book.

There certainly was a change, too, in her, and for a moment, as she read his thoughts, she was disposed to make him an ally; but to do that she knew that she must fight against Devick, and she hardened her heart.

"I can fight my own battle," she said to herself; and then aloud — "Really, Mr. Brand, I cannot help you more than by saying that I believe you are right. A young person was here this morning, and probably, during my absence, she went out with Mr. Devick."

"I know all that, madam," said Brand, quickly. "Now tell me, where are they gone?"

She laughed bitterly.

"Do you suppose that Mr. Devick would tell me where he was going, perhaps before he knew himself?"

"You the man's wife's and talk to me like this!" cried Brand, indignantly. "You force me to speak as I would not. No, no!" he cried, checking himself. "Madam, I implore you to help me in this terrible strait."

"I cannot help you," she said, coldly; "and I must ask you to bring this unpleasant interview to an end."

"But, madam——"

"Sir, you insult me by your intrusion, and forcing upon me an inquisition respecting a girl like that!"

Brand started as if he had been stung, and turned upon her angrily; but it was a woman with whom he had to deal, and he mastered his rage and said to her, very sternly—

"Would it not be better that you should give me all the information in your power than that the matter should be placed in the hands of the police?"

She again hesitated, for the word police suggested to her searching the house, and perhaps fatal injury to Devick.

That would be carrying her vengeance farther than she wished, and she spoke out in defence, to save him at any cost to others and herself.

"Bah!" she exclaimed; "what do you mean? What do you want to know?"

"Where Miss Robson has been taken, that I may find her."

"Are you sure she was here?"

"Yes. I have the witness below who came with her, and was sent on when she entered the cab or fly. The boy is now in your hall."

"Mr. Brand," she cried, scornfully, "why do you interest yourself in such a case as this?"

"Her father is in prison, and helpless to act for himself," said Brand, quickly.

"And as you have no further interest in the matter than as the family medical man," said the woman, mockingly, "you are trying to find the young lady?"

Brand burned.

"I was afraid that you were more deeply interested in the young lady, and of course if you had been, I could not have spoken as I do now."

"And you will tell me?" cried Brand, fighting down his agitation.

"Well, yes; what I can. I do not interest myself in such matters, and I presume it is a matter of business—something to do with begging Mr. Devick not to proceed to extremities over the debts of the father. I believe the young lady made an appointment with Mr. Devick this morning. She sent on a boy first to see if he would receive her, and came on soon after wards."

"And then?"

"Then?" Oh! some excuse was made to get rid of the boy, and then——"

"Well, madam!" cried Brand, sternly, "what then?"

"Oh, then they went away together."

"It is not true!" cried Brand, furiously, but with a horrible sense of agony at his heart.

"That is gentlemanly!" said the woman, coldly. "You asked me for information, and I have given it to you. Now you insult me. Man, how can you be so foolish as to excite yourself about a girl like that?"

He took a step towards her, in the rage that seized him; but it was a woman who met his display of violence with a contemptuous, mocking smile, and he felt his helplessness as he drew back, with her words ringing in his ears; and, half stunned mentally by the suggestions that the jealous fancy was too prone to accept, he went unsteadily down the stairs, signed to the boy to follow, climbed into the waiting cab, and the man drove him home.

He did not tell the boy to enter the cab, so Jack climbed upon the box seat, wondering why they were going to Mr. Brand's, while the woman at No. 19 went to the drawing-room window and watched their departure.

"Poor fellow," she said to herself. "How he seems to suffer!"

"Then, after a pause, as the vehicle drove off—

"Well, why should not others suffer as well as I?"

CHAPTER XIV.

FAST IN THE SNARE.

It was some few minutes before Devick dared to look round at the sweet, placid countenance at his side, and when he did, and saw the calm air of content and the hopeful smile upon the lips, he turned his face away again, and tremblingly took his pocket-book from his breast and opened it, to be apparently busied with its contents.

"Not yet," he muttered. "I might scare her."

The cab rumbled on, with the glasses rattling, and the old ironwork joining in the discord; but Grace Robson heard nothing of the traffic or the streets through which she passed, for her mental vision was filled with one scene only, and that imaginary.

For she saw herself entering the gloomy portals of a prison where her anxious, careworn father was impatiently waiting for freedom, and in a few minutes she, his child, would be placing her arms about his neck, and telling him, with smiles and tears that he was free once more.

And thus it was that the cab rattled and jangled on for a good twenty minutes before she began to notice that they were not going through the denser streets, but along by houses in whose front courts the occupants set up gladiatorial fights, and backed plants and evergreen shrubs to struggle against the London smoke, with the result that the smoke always won.

It was a district that Grace did not know; still for a few minutes she did not speak, but began to take more interest in her route.

Then her heart beat a little faster, and the vague suspicion she had felt before invaded her breast.

She glanced at Devick, and saw that he was making figures busily with his pencil upon a leaf of the pocket-book over which he bent.

That was encouraging, and the vague fear was for the moment exorcised.

She gazed at the driver and the man upon the box—Gedge.

The fear grew more distant still, and she felt ready to laugh at her fancies, as childish and absurd.

But still, as the cab went on and on, and the patches of green told that they were getting into a more suburban part, the vague dread would come back, and at last, plucking up courage, she turned to Devick.

"Is—is this the way to the prison?" she said.

"Nine hundred and eighty-seven, four, six. Eh?"

Devick did not raise his head.

"Is this the way to the prison, Mr. Devick?"

"—Added to six hundred and——Eh? I beg your pardon, Miss Robson."

"Is this the way to the prison?"

"The prison? No," he said, half wonderingly. "Didn't I tell you? Bah! My head is so full of work. We are going round by my lawyer's first. I said so, didn't I?"

"No," said Grace, whose heart began to sink.

"I ought to. Beg pardon. There directly. I thought it better to make sure of him, and take him down with us. Excuse me a moment. I want to cast this up, and then I'll chat with you. I'm very poor company for a lady."

He went on with his writing, and Grace tried hard to feel composed, for something within seemed to whisper danger, while outwardly everything appeared perfectly matter-of-fact and business like.

"That's it!" said Devick, suddenly closing his pocket-book and thrusting in the pencil. "These lawyers give us a deal of trouble. Oh! here we are!"

The cab man was drawing up at a gate in a high wall, beyond which could be seen clumps of lilac and the top windows of a low villa; while on either side of the road there were houses of the same secluded type.

"These men of pounce and parchment make themselves pretty comfortable, he continued, cheerily, and his look once more chased away the vague sense of danger that troubled Grace. "Here!" he cried, with his head half out of the window. "Jump down and ring."

Gedge obeyed, and as he did so Devick turned to his companion.

"You'll excuse my going in and leaving you?" he said. "I won't be many minutes. Nice neighborhood this!"

As he was speaking he handed Gedge his bag, and signed to the man to open the door for just then a wire or cord seemed to have been pulled, and the gate swung open a few inches.

Devick sprang out and stood arranging his stock and the set of his coat.

"Shut the cab!" he said, quickly, to Gedge. "That will do. Take in the bag."

Gedge pushed open the door and passed in through the wall, into what seemed to be a little well-kept garden, Devick following, and then the door swung to, and Grace was left in the cab, thinking how weak and foolish she was to let such fancies come into her breast.

"I am upset and easily made hysterical," she said to herself, as she sat back in the cab, looking at the trees running above the walls on either side of the lonely road, down which a butcher's cart passed rapidly; otherwise she did not see a soul.

Then she looked at the door again, and could see through a narrow slit that there was a paved path, and that a grape-vine was trained against a wall that seemed to divide the garden from the next.

"I hope he will not be long," she thought and then she was just thinking how tiresome all these forms were with lawyers, when there was a quick step on the path, the door was thrown open, and Devick appeared hatless, and with a large blue foolscap sheet in his hand, covered with crabbed writing.

"Very sorry to trouble you, Miss Robson," he said, in a quick, petulish manner; "these lawyers will make up a bill somehow. You must come in, please, and witness this order of discharge."

"Witness it?" said Grace, with the shrinking sensation coming over her again as Devick opened the door and rattled down the steps of the old-fashioned clarence.

"Yes; I have to sign my acceptance of the discharge of your father; but it must be done in the presence of a witness."

Her heart was fluttering, but she knew not why, for all was so business-like and matter-of-fact.

The papers had to be signed, no doubt; and it was, she knew, a customary thing for them to be signed in the presence of a witness; and as she descended, feeling more agitated, she thought how satisfactory it was that she was there instead of her mother, for the signature of a wife would be valueless on the husband's behalf.

"Snug little place, isn't it?" said Devick, as he held open the gate for her to pass through, closing it softly after her; and Grace found herself in a bosky garden surrounded by high walls, save where a little low, prettily-kept villa faced her.

She did not answer, but followed Devick along the paved path and through a tiny conservatory into a little hall.

"In here, Miss Robson," he said, rustling the paper, and opening a door on the right.

She followed him, with the sense of danger attacking her more strongly now; but she only found herself in a small, well-furnished room, quite a boudoir, with a second door opposite the window that looked on to the garden.

"He is in the library here," said Devick, advancing to the second door; "this way."

Something seemed to be dragging Grace Robson back, but she resisted, telling herself that it was cowardice, and she walked firmly through the farther door, with a faint sound of wheels heard through the window at the moment, though the sound did not suggest to her then that the cab was being driven off, leaving her to her fate.

She found herself in a handsome little drawing-room with folding-doors, evidently leading into another room beyond, the apparent smallness of the place being deceptive, for it extended back some distance.

But there was no business-like table covered with papers; no grey-haired, keen-looking lawyer waiting her coming; and now suspicion came with a fierce rush as she turned upon Devick, who had closed the door after him, and stood before her on the rich, soft carpet, smiling, as he threw down the paper he held.

"Mr. Devick!" she exclaimed.

"Grace Robson!" he answered.

"The lawyer, sir—the paper to sign?"

"Oh, by-and-by," he replied, laughing heartily.

She took a step or two towards the door, and he made way, so that she caught and turned the handle; but the door did not move.

"What does this mean?" she cried, turning from a frightened girl to a cool, firm woman on the instant, now that she found herself really face to face with danger.

"Only that you are very welcome to my little home."

"Your home, sir!" she cried, her excitement getting the better of her for the moment, and she once more tried and rattled the door.

"Yes," he replied, with a smile, "my home; my little snuggery that I come to sometimes as a change from dingy Clerkenwell. Do you like it?"

"Will you have the goodness to unfasten this door, sir?" she said, coldly.

"I must beg your pardon for getting you here by a subterfuge, for I am afraid that if I had simply asked you to come and see me you would have refused."

"Mr. Devick, will you open this door?" she cried, a little more loudly, though she tried hard to be calm.

"Well, no; not yet," he said, smiling.

Grace darted across the room to the farther doors, but they were evidently locked and strongly made, for they did not move as she tried to shake them.

"Now, my dear child," he said, throwing himself on to a lounge, "pray don't be foolish."

Grace caught sight of a bell, which she ran to and pulled, but there was no sound, and, growing more and more alarmed, she now ran to the window.

For the first time he now interfered, caught her by the arm, and swung her round as she was passing him, while he leaped up and stood in the opening looking out upon the side of the garden and a great ivy-covered wall.

"Don't be foolish, my dear child," he said. "There, there! I must not have you beat yourself against the bars of your cage."

Grace stamped as heavily as she could upon the floor, but the carpet was so thick that the sound was deadened.

"Come, come, little one," he said, "be sensible; and, to help make you so, let me tell you that if you were to fire guns or pistols in the place not a sound would reach outside."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A BOARDING-HOUSE keeper was at a loss to know why one of her boarders carried two pieces of steak from the table up to his bed-room. She found it out when she saw he had got new hinges on his trunk.

Bric-a-Brac.

ROMAN BATHS.—The Roman baths were supplied from stupendous aqueducts. The walls of their lofty apartments were covered with curious mosaics. The Egyptian granite was beautifully encrusted with the precious green marble of Numidia; the perpetual stream of hot water was poured into the spacious basins, through so many wide mouths of bright and massy silver; and the meanest Roman could purchase, with a small copper coin, the daily enjoyment of pomp and luxury, which might excite the envy of the kings of Asia.

THE FIRST.—The National Museum at Washington has received some relics of the first iron furnace in America. This was at Falling Creek, in Chesterfield county, Virginia, a few miles below Richmond, but on the opposite side of the James. The works were begun in 1619, but in 1622 were destroyed in an Indian massacre. They were never renewed, and the next attempt to manufacture iron was made by Gov. Spotswood, near the present site of Fredericksburg, about 1726. To this the plantation of George Washington's father, Augustine, contributed much ore.

THE MARIGOLD.—In Mexico the marigold is known as the "death-flower," from a legend that this flower made 'its appearance "on grounds on which had been spilled the blood of the unfortunate Mexicans who fell victims to the love of gold and the thirst of power which induced the Spaniards to destroy those unoffending people." It is called by the Italians "the flower of all months," and Chaucer knew it by the name of "gold." One of its popular nicknames is "spouse of the sun," an old fancy noticed by Shakspeare, who speaks of—

> The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun,
> And with him rises weeping.

FREE AND EASY.—The Greeks are a people who love to be unconstrained, even in their Parliament, which is now in season. Deputies sit with their hats on, having their great coats over their seats, and sip their lemonade perpetually. The buffet, which consists merely of a supply of cold water and lemons, is behind the Presidential tribune, and if a speaker pauses to take breath or to pick up the thread of his discourse there is a general rush to light cigarettes at the President's taper. When the King is present the cigarettes and lemonade are less conspicuous, but the members yield their places to officials and there is a sprinkling of ladies and of men who take merely theoretic interest in politics.

SLAVES OF OLD.—Even four hundred years ago the peasantry were mere serfs in England. At the time of Wat Tyler, this was the case, and it was to free them that he and others rose and led the people in revolt. A manuscript in the Cotton collection contains the following deed, which may be translated thus: "Know all men by these presents that I, Katerna D'Engayne, who was wife of Sir Thomas D'Engayne, Knight, have given, granted, and delivered for a certain sum of money to Sir Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, Thomas Wattez, my born thrall, of Schaldewell, with all his goods, and chattels wheresoever found, together with all his posterity and progeny by him begotten. Given at Exminister on Sunday next after the Feast of All Saints, in the 8th year of Richard the Second, after the Conquest of England."

HOMŒOPATHIC PERFUMES.—The odoriferous molecule of musk must be incomprehensibly small, when we are told the particles one grain of musk had, in a radius of ninety feet, disengaged in one day. No microscopical power has yet been conceived to enable the human eye to see one of these atoms; yet the organs of smell have the sensitiveness to detect them. We cannot imagine their smallness, as it is stated that the same grain of musk undergoes absolutely no diminution in weight. A single drop of the oil of thyme, ground down with a piece of sugar and a little alcohol, will communicate its odor to twenty-five gallons of water. Haller kept for forty years papers perfumed with one grain of ambergris. After this time the odor was as strong as ever. Boerhaave has evaluated a molecule of camphor sensible to the smell to 2,232,584,000th of a grain. Boyle has observed that one drachm of assafœtida exposed to the open air had lost in six days the eighth part of one grain, from which Keill concludes that in one single minute it had lost 69,120th of a grain.

THE MEXICAN SCORPION.—A correspondent, writing from Mexico says: The most common of these pests are the scorpion—alacrans—for they become hale and hearty grandparents within 24 hours, and their numerous progeny are forever darting everywhere with inconceivable rapidity, their tails, which hold the sting, ready to fly up at a moment's warning. They are in the wall, between the bricks of the floor, lurking within your garments. Turn up a corner of the rug or the table cloth and you disturb an interesting family of them; pick up your shoes in the morning, and out they flop; in short, every article you touch must be treated like a dose of medicine—"to be well shaken before taken." The common variety hereabout are about three inches long, and the yellowish-brown ones are considered most poisonous. In Durango they are black, and so alarmingly numerous that the authorities offer rewards—so much per tail—to the boys for killing them. Their sting is usually fatal to a child, and more or less severe in its effects on adults, according to the state of the system. Some have been known to recover after remaining for eight days foaming at the mouth in convulsions, and with the stomach swollen as in dropsy; others, by prompt and energetic treatment, do not suffer much.

THE PRESENT.

BY ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

Do not crouch to-day, and worship
The old Past, whose life has fled
Hush your voice to tender reverence;
Crowned he lies but cold and dead;
For the Present reigns our monarch,
With an added weight of hours;
Honor her, for she is mighty!
Honor her, for she is ours!

See the shadows of his heroes
Girt around her cloudy throne;
Every day the ranks are strengthened
By great hearts to him unknown;
Noble things the great Past promised,
Holy dreams, both strange and new;
But the Present shall fulfil them,
What he promised, she shall do.

She inherits all his treasures,
She is heir to all his fame,
And the light that lightens round her
Is the lustre of his name;
She is wise with all his wisdom,
Living on his grave she stands,
On her brow she bears his laurels,
And his harvest in her hands.

Coward, can she reign and conquer
If we thus her glory dim?
Let us fight for her as nobly
As our fathers fought for him.
God, who crowns the dying ages,
Bids her rule, and we obey—
Bids us cast our lives before her,
Bids us serve the great To-day.

A PERILOUS GAME;

—OR,—

Her Mad Revenge.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE "IGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE moon rose over the city, and poured its light on to the front of the Hotel Italia.

In a balcony on the first floor Lord Norman was seated in a low chair.

A cigar that had gone out was between his fingers, and his thoughts seemed to have wandered far away.

He was looking older by some years than when we saw him last, and there was a scar on his forehead which Lord Harry's stag had left as a slight reminder.

There was, too, a sad moodiness in the dark eyes that robbed his face of its youthfulness, and was not good to see.

It was the look of a man who had found life considerably less than worth living for—a look of doubt and distrust of his fellows which Rousseau might have worn in his worst epoch.

He sat very still, and with the grave, queer look in his eyes, and doubtless his mind was wandering to some of those moonlight nights on which, with Floris by his side, he had felt assured that the world was the best of all possible worlds, and that life was well worth living.

Absorbed in this moody contemplation, he did not hear a light step on the window-sill behind him; and Lady Blanche stepped out and laid her hand on his shoulder before he knew that she was near.

"How beautiful it is, Bruce," she said, softly, looking out on the city that lay in the moonlight beneath them like a picture of Canaletti's. "I am awfully fond of Florence. And one sees it at its best to-night."

He nodded, but did not speak.

Never very talkative, he had become remarkably silent and short of speech since the news of Floris's "falseness" had been broken to him.

"Poor papa has gone to bed," she went on, softly, her hand resting on his shoulder, so that her white delicate fingers could touch his hair. "He is tired out. What do you think he said to-night, Bruce?" and she blushed and smiled.

"Don't know," came listlessly from his lips.

"He said that we might have waited until we were married before we made this trip, and that it was confoundedly like a honeymoon. Is 'confoundedly' a bad word, Bruce? I have never felt quite sure whether I was safe in using it. And yet it is so expressive, isn't it?"

He did not reply.

Often he let the soft silvery voice flow on without a word in response.

"—Poor papa. It was a little too bad to drag him across the channel; but it will do him good, and I am sure you are ever so much better, aren't you, Bruce?"

"Considering that there hasn't been the slightest thing the matter with me for months past, I may say that I am," he answered languidly. "I've noticed, Blanche, that you have got a fixed idea in your head that this trip was made for my especial benefit. It is very flattering to me, but my——"

"Yes, yes, I know," she said, with a little laugh, but with a sudden restless shimmer in her eyes that was strangely at variance with her serene and reposeful voice. "But all the time it was I who was so anxious to get out of England. It is quite true, Bruce, I had grown sick of England, Scotland especially."

"Scotland isn't England," he murmured.

"I longed to get away, and I should have been ill if I hadn't crossed the Channel. And—and it was so good of you to consent to our marriage taking place at Paris——"

He looked at his cigar, and seeing that it was out, flung it away and felt for his cigar-case.

It was a strangely cool way in which to respond to a lady-love's reference to her marriage.

"—Paris is far nicer for a wedding," she went on, not hurriedly, but with a certain assumption of ease and indolence which did not agree with the restless flashing of her dark eyes. "They make so much fuss in England, and it is always cold there in May."

"I've sat with my knees up the chimney of a Paris hotel in June," he said, absently.

"Yes, yes, but it is very different somehow. Ah, yes, I am glad we are not in England."

"So am I," he said, listlessly. "Were there any lights in the room——"

She glided through the open window and brought him a candle.

"Oh, thanks; I didn't mean you to get it," he said, almost rebukingly. "I wish you would realise that I am no longer an invalid, Blanche, and that I don't desire to be waited on by a Circassian slave."

"And suppose I like waiting on you," she said, smiling down at him, her lips a little apart, her eyes resting on him with the look a woman wears for the man she loves. "A Circassian slave. Circassians are very beautiful, aren't they Bruce? That was a compliment, and a very nice one. Well, I am content to be your slave, sir!" and she bent down until her lips just touched his hair.

He looked up at her steadily, gravely, anxiously, for a moment, then he suppressed a sigh and took her hand and held it for a moment.

"You are too good and grand a woman to be any man's slave, Blanche," he said, quietly.

"Good," she echoed. "Good! Do you think I am good, Bruce? I didn't know that you cared for good women so much——"

He laughed bitterly.

"Perhaps I have met with so few that I haven't properly acquired the taste. Is that what you mean? There was once an honest lawyer, you know—but he carried his head under his arm. There are good women no doubt, but it is because they have not met with temptation."

She paled. She knew of whom he was thinking.

"Come, Bruce, that is rather sweeping," she said, forcing a laugh. "But are you going to stay out here all the evening?"

"I'll finish my cigar before I come in," he said. "Your father hates the smell of tobacco in the room."

"May I stay with you?" she asked, almost meekly, almost like a slave indeed. "I want to write a letter, and then I'll come back. I shall not be five minutes," she added. "Shall I tell them to send you some wine or anything of that kind."

"Thanks," he said indifferently.

She bent over him again and laid her cheek against his face, and he put up his hand and touched her, but very coldly, very coldly!

"Are you aware that this balcony is visible to the promenaders below, and that we are doubtless affording them a kind of tableau vivant, free, gratis, for nothing?" he said.

"What do I care," she laughed. "All the world may know I love you if it chooses. Ah, Bruce, I wonder whether I shall ever have you to give me back half, a quarter, a tenth of what I give you," she added in a whisper, then turned and left him.

"I wonder!" he murmured, with a heavy sigh. "I wonder! Poor Blanche! What a game of cross purposes it is; a mean and game, which, no doubt, affords the gods a certain amount of pleasure but which costs us more than it is worth!"

Five minutes passed, and then he rose and began to pace up and down.

The balcony ran the length of the house, and, making a turn, reached the head of the staircase leading to the street.

The city looked so beautiful that he felt tempted to a stroll.

Forgetting, with a significant completeness, that she had promised to rejoin him, he got his hat from the room, and passing along the balcony went down the steps into the street.

Ten minutes after he had gone, a tall figure, a duplicate of his, stepped out from one of the rooms on the same floor, and walking to the spot where he had sat, went to the rail and leant over.

As he did so, Lady Blanche came through the window with the letter she had written in her hand.

"Bruce, I have written my letter. Shall we go and post it? A walk would be beautiful now, it is so cool and pleasant. Bruce, are you asleep?" and she went up softly behind him and touched his arm.

The man turned round slowly and raised his hat, the moonlight falling full upon his wan and haggard face.

Lady Blanche staggered and clutched the rail with one hand while the other flew to her heart.

"Oscar Raymond," she breathed, with ashy lips. "Oscar Raymond!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

LORD NORMAN stood for a moment at the bottom of the steps, then aimlessly turned to the right and sauntered along the quiet street.

The beauty of the city, hushed in the serene rays of the moon, touched him with a pensive sadness, and recalled the past with a peculiar poignancy.

He was to be married to Lady Blanche in two or three weeks, by which time they expected to reach Paris in their wanderings; but if anyone had stopped him and asked him why he was marrying her, he would have been puzzled to find a good and sufficient reason.

After the recovery from the shock of Floris's supposed baseness, he had declared that he would never again look upon a woman with the eyes of kindness, would live and die hating and avoiding her sex.

For weeks he had kept himself secluded from the world, had shut himself up and yielded to the bitterness and grief which the destruction of his faith in his beautiful girl-love had caused him.

But men of Lord Norman's class cannot remain in seclusion long.

They have duties to perform which may not be neglected, and gradually he emerged from his retirement and was seen in his old world again—the world of the clubs and "the shady side of Pall Mall."

His friends were glad enough to see him, and made him welcome, but none were gladder or extended a warmer welcome than Lady Blanche.

It was some time before he called upon her; indeed he met her at the theatre one evening by chance, or probably he would not have called at all.

The sight of her awoke memories so painful that he was almost unable to speak for a moment or two, and if Lady Blanche had not been a remarkably clever woman, he might have said "Good-evening," and avoided her for months—years, perhaps.

But Lady Blanche was gifted with that tact which philosophers tell us is a better possession than rank or wealth.

She met him and talked to him as if such a person as Floris Carlisle had never existed, and as if the incidents of Ballyfloe had never occurred.

"Been out of town, Bruce?" she said softly, with a pleasant smile. "How well you are looking. A little thinner, perhaps, but then you were ill so long, weren't you? How admirably they are playing to-night, aren't they? I am enjoying it so much."

Then there had been a pause for a minute or two before she said—

"Will you come and see papa to-morrow, Bruce? He was asking me to-day whether I knew where you were."

And he had called and stayed to lunch; Lady Blanche made much of him, but in a quiet unobtrusive way that did not embarrass him.

He took to "dropping in" at odd times. There was always a place reserved for him at the dinner-table, and if he came she was quietly glad to see him, and if he did not come she was too wise to ask him why he did not.

After dinner he would take his cigar into the conservatory, while Lord Seymour, who did not smoke snoozed in his arm-chair. Lady Blanche's boudoir opened out on to the conservatory, and she was generally seated there, sometimes playing the piano, and she would play soft sonatas of Schubert while he smoked his cigar.

She did not talk to him, but she let him alone, allowed him to feel how comfortable it was to have a place so home-like to come to and muse in, and how still nicer it was to have a beautiful woman who was content to be his friend and nothing more.

Need I go on? Does not anyone know how such a state of things must inevitably end?

To him—and more especially to her—who waits, everything is possible.

Lady Blanche played a waiting game, and her reward came in due season.

One evening, in the midst of a song she was singing, while he was lounging in the glass-house within hearing, the song came to an abrupt stop.

He turned to see the cause, and saw that her head had dropped on her hands, as if she had broken down.

He flung his cigar away and went quickly to her.

"What is the matter, Blanche?" he asked.

She looked up and tried to smile, as if ashamed and annoyed.

"Nothing, nothing at all, Bruce," she said, wiping her eyes. "I felt rather low-spirited, that was all. Everything seems to so wrong and at cross purposes, doesn't it? Go back to your cigar, Bruce, and I'll play something excruciatingly lively."

"Do not," he said.

Then he stood still and looked down at her.

He know that she loved him; she was beautiful—a woman of whom any man might well be proud.

It was necessary that he should marry, unless he wished the old title he bore to die out.

Why not she as well as any other? In time, he told himself, with a swift pang—he should forget Floris, should learn to love Blanche.

He made up his mind in a moment as he stood there.

"Blanche," he said, laying his hand gently on her shoulder, "will you be my wife?"

For a moment the color left her face, and her heart seemed to stand still. It had come at last.

"Be my wife, Blanche," he said gently, "and I will try to make you happy."

She turned her face upon him and looked at him with all her soul in her eyes.

"Ah, Bruce, you would have to try such a very little. Ah, you know—you know."

Then he bent and kissed her, and she put her arms round his neck and drew him down to her in a passionate embrace.

And so she had won him at last. She was too clever to rest assured on a false security.

While Bruce was in England he might meet Floris Carlisle at any hour, explanations might ensue, and——

She persuaded him to take her, Lord Seymour accompanying them, on a continental trip.

"We can be married at Paris, Bruce. I hate London. Let us be married at Paris."

He had consented, as he would have done if she had asked him to take her to Timbuctoo; and so here they were in Florence, and in a few weeks they were to be married.

Lord Norman sauntered on, thinking of it all, wandering mentally back to the old days when Floris was at his side, and he had so often tried to persuade her to name the day for their union. She had always put him off.

"She loved Bertie all the time, poor girl," he thought bitterly, as he stopped and looked at the river, leaning on the bridge, all unconsciously, where Floris so often stood. "Poor girl, why did she deceive me? Why did she not come to me and say, 'Bruce, I do not love you, I find that my heart is not given to you; I love Bertie'? Heaven knows I would have let her go without a single hard thought. I loved her too well not be able to make a sacrifice. But the deceit, the awful deceit and falseness of her conduct—and, great Heaven, she so seemingly pure and honest and childlike. Oh, there is something in women, some latent baseness in their natures, which we shall never reach the bottom of. I wonder whether Blanche will stand by me, or whether, when she finds that I cannot return her love, she will take to some other man. Well, I shall deserve it for trusting her. I wonder where they, Bertie and Floris, are now. It is strange how completely I have lost all sight and trace of them. She might have been a trick of the imagination instead of a very dear, a very bitter reality. How beautiful she used to look with those shy, proud eyes of hers, so full too, as I thought—Heaven help me—of love, and yet too proud to own it. I would have given my life for that girl; my life, my honor—anything, everything I possessed. I have given my life, for she has robbed it of all that made it worth living. I wonder when I shall see her again. I expect some day I shall meet her at some stupid ball or dinner, and she will come up to me and say, quite easily, with that little smile about the corners of her sweet mouth, 'Oh, Lord Norman, how do you do? How long it is since we have met. I hope you have been well. Have you seen the new picture?' Oh, Heaven, what a base and heartless world it is."

He lit another cigar, and turned from the bridge.

But the hotel did not seem inviting; it was better out in the quiet, moonlit streets. He sauntered on.

Then there came a band of noisy young people who had been drinking too much of their beloved chianto; and the good red wine had made them so lively and so vocal, that to avoid them Lord Norman turned up into one of the quiet streets.

He sauntered on; the songs—Italians always sing, and not at all badly, when they are in liquor—of the merry party died away and in silence he paced under the trees that lined the road on either side.

Presently he heard the sound of a piano. It would not have attracted his attention—for it was not the first piano he had heard that night—but there was something in the air that seemed familiar.

What was it? A voice now rose, a very soft pretty voice, and accompanied the piano.

He could not catch the words, and yet, almost unconsciously, he found himself supplying them! What were they? Surely he had heard them sung to this tune!

"My sweet girl-love with frank, grey eyes,
Though years have passed I see you still,
There where you stood beside the mill,
Beneath the bright autumnal skies.
Low o'er the marsh the curlew flew,
The mavis sang upon the bough.
Oh, love, dear love, my heart was true,
It beats as truly, fondly, now,
Though years have passed I love you yet;
Do you still remember, or do you forget?"

Where had he heard them? They were the verses Floris had sung to Bertie one morning—the morning of the Fancy Fair! A pang shot through his heart; in his mind's eyes he saw her as she looked that day, so fair and bright and girlish!

He looked up at the house.

It was a villa almost shrouded by trees; there was a light burning in the window on the ground floor, and through the open window came the sound of the piano and the voice.

He leant against one of the piers of the gate and listened, very sad and melancholy; but the song had ceased.

Great Heaven! was it possible that it could be only a few months ago since he had heard Floris sing that song!

It seemed years, a lifetime ago, and he might almost fancy himself an old man as he leant there.

A few minutes passed, and he was about to go on his way when he heard a light step behind him.

Someone had come from the house into the garden, tempted into the night air by the moonlight.

He wondered vaguely whether it was the unknown singer.

The steps came nearer, and the tall slim figure of a girl came slowly down to the gate and stood behind it, so near that he could have touched her with his hand, but he could not see her face.

So there she stood within reach of him, all unconscious of his proximity.

She stood for a moment and then turned, but at that instant a longing to see her face which had fallen upon Lord Norman became irresistible.

He rose to his full height and turned to the gate.

He knew her at once, and his heart seemed to stand still.

If it had been to save his life he could not have resisted speaking her name.

"Floris!" he said softly, yet in a tone of intense feeling.

She heard him, and uttering a faint cry, put her hand to her heart, but she did not turn her head.

Perhaps—who knows?—she thought that it was a trick of her imagination.

How often in her dreams had she heard him call her thus! In her dreams!

"Floris!" he said again.

Then she turned her white face and looked at him.

For a minute they looked into each other's eyes, as if they were both looking at the ghosts of their dead selves.

Then she saw it was indeed he, and with a low cry of pain—actual pain—she covered her face with her hands.

He set his teeth. He misunderstood the gesture, and took it for one of guilt and remorse.

"Floris," he said, in a low voice; "is it indeed you? Are you afraid of me?"

Her hands dropped from her face, and she shook her head, her great eyes fixed on him with a wistful yearning.

"Will you not speak to me?" he said, holding the gate with his hot hands, his heart beating fast. "You are not afraid of me! You have no need to be! Speak to me, Floris!"

She opened her lips—the lips he had kissed.

"No; I am not afraid," she murmured, and her voice sounded to him like a ghost's. "How—why did you come here?" and she looked round.

"I am staying here, in Florence," he said with a voice that shook from agitation. "I did not know——"

"You did not know that I was here," she finished for him, "or you would not have come."

"No; I should not have come! No! And yet I am not sorry that I have seen you!"

A pause for a moment. She could not summon strength enough to leave him. His eyes—so wistful, so sad, so reproachful—held her as by a charm.

"Have you—been ill?" he asked suddenly, almost gently.

She shook her head.

"Why do you wear that black dress?" he asked.

Her face quivered.

"My mother—" she faltered.

He hung his head.

"I did not know. Why did you not tell——but why should you? And you are not ill?"

"No."

"And—and—you are happy?" he continued, hoarsely.

The look of reproach, of angelic sadness that shone from her dark eyes went to his soul.

He sighed—it was almost a groan.

"Tired of you already!" he said hoarsely. "Great Heaven! is it possible? Floris, I could almost wish that I had not seen you!—and yet——"

Two tears gathered in her eyes and fell slowly on her cheek. The sight of them tortured him.

"For Heaven's sake, don't cry!" he said hastily; "the—the past is over and done with. I—I am sorry you are not happy. Oh, Heaven! to see you standing there and to know the gulf that divides us. Floris—Floris, why did you do it?"

She looked at him with troubled, wondering questioning.

"Why did you, Floris? Heaven—why did you not tell me—why did you not come to me and—and——but to go like that, without a word! Did you want to break my heart—were you quite heartless, Floris?"

She looked at him as if she could not believe her senses, and one white hand went to her forehead tremblingly.

"I do not understand! Why do you speak to me like this?—why do you ask me these questions? Oh, it is cruel, cruel, knowing how wicked you have been—how hard and heartless yourself!"

"I!" he said, in amazement; and in his eagerness and excitement he pushed the gate open; but, as she shrank back, he too stepped back and closed it again. "I!"

"Oh, do not mock me," she almost wailed. "I do not want you to say that you are sorry; I did not wish to see you; I was learning to forget——"

Her voice faltered and broke.

"Forget!" he echoed almost fiercely. "You can talk of forgetting to me! Do you think that any human being, however callous, can forget another she has so wronged as you have wronged me?"

"Wronged you!" she cried, in a low voice—"wronged you! I? Oh, Bruce, Bruce!"

"Yes, cruelly, foully wronged me!" he said, passionately. "Did ever man love a woman more dearly than I loved you? And you stole away from me, jilted me without a word of warning—one word of remorse or penitence! If I did not love you, I could strike you down at my feet now."

She shrank back from his blazing eyes and wild, wicked words.

"I did you no wrong," she said sadly, her lips quivering.

He controlled himself as if by a mighty effort, and drew a long breath.

"We will not bandy words," he said grimly; "I will not detain you many moments longer. I want to say this, and then I will go. When I heard of your treachery—and his—I swore that that wherever I met him, let it be when and where it might, I would kill him. But I have repented of that rash oath; I should have remembered that your love made him sacred to me. Tell him that he need hide no longer—that he need not fear me. For your sake he shall go unpunished for as black a piece of treachery as the world has seen since Judas!"

Floris put out her hand to him.

"What are you saying? What are these wild words? Whom am I to tell? Oh, am I dreaming?"

"Whom? The man who stole you from me—Bertie Clifforde," he said, white to the lips and unnaturally calm.

Floris put her hands to her brow.

"Bertie Clifforde — the man—! Oh Heaven, what does this mean?"

He looked at her, a wild, mad doubt rising in his mind.

"Yes, Bertie Clifforde! Are you not married to him?"

"No," came from her parched lips.

He clutched the gate.

"No! Then, do you tell me. But no, he would not be so base and vile as that. Then where is he? You fled with him; you left Ballyfloe together! Will you deny that?"

Floris came nearer. Truth alone in her face the dignity of injured innocence beamed from her dark eyes.

"I deny! No! It is true I came with Lord Clifforde from Ballyfloe—"

He made a despairing gesture.

"Why should we bandy words? Good-bye, Floris, good-bye! Tell him he is safe from me, tell him that—" he turned as her voice rang out, clear and commanding,—

"Stop!"

He stood stock still and waited.

"Lord Norman, you have cruelly slandered me—aye, more, an absent man! One so honorable and good that his name should not pass your stained and dishonored lips! You accuse me of flying—flying—with Lord Clifforde!"

She laughed,—a terrible, piteous laugh.

"—What mad story you have heard I know not; the truth is all I know or care for. Lord Clifforde met me by accident at Ballyfloe Station, he accompanied me to London, and then, having done all that a brother could do to comfort and console me under my heavy trouble, he left me. Since that hour I have neither seen nor heard from him! There is my answer to the foul lie you heard and believed!"

He glared at her—white, breathless.

"You—you received a telegram from him!"

"A telegram?" she repeated. "Ah! From him? No, from home. It was to say that my mother was dying——"

"Great and merciful Heaven! Floris—Floris!"—he cried in a voice of despair—"is this true? Oh, how blind, blind I have been; how mad! Floris, forgive me! Forgive——Oh, my poor darling! Why are you here? Why did you not write to me? Why——My brain is reeling. Have pity on me, Floris, and tell me all, this hideous mystery holds me in a net!"

She saw the sweat standing in great drops upon his brow, and his hands clench on the gate until they were white as his face.

"I am here—earning my living," she said simply. "I came here to be away from England, to learn to forget, to—to—I must go now,—Lord Norman. Good-bye."

"No!" he cried hoarsely; "not yet. Go? by Heaven, you shall not go! Floris! Floris! My darling, my long lost darling!" and he stretched out his hands.

A light, a beautiful light, shone in her eyes, and she made a step forward. Then suddenly she stopped and shuddered.

"No! No!" she wailed. "You forget—you have forgotten Lady Blanche!"

He started and a cold chill fell upon his passion.

"Blanche!" he echoed huskily. Great Heaven! He was to be married to her in a few days, married to her; and Floris——

She put out her hand to him.

"Oh, Bruce, Bruce; how could you have been so wicked?"

He hung his head.

"Be just!" he murmured. "You left me. I was alone in the world! I had lost you—what did it matter whom I married——"

She moaned and hid her face, then she looked up suddenly.

"I left you!" she said, in a low, intense tone. "You had lost me! Oh, Bruce, Bruce, you were false to me before I left Ballyfloe. You think I do not know——"

He started.

"I false to you before—I false to you! Floris, what is this? For Heaven's sake, speak plainly! Speak out at once! I am almost frenzied with this torture! I false to you! Am I dreaming?"

She looked at him, her eyes full of a sad reproach and despair.

"Why do you force me to speak?" she said, in a low voice. "What can it matter now? All is past between us. You are married——"

"No!" he thundered.

She panted, then her quick eyes read the truth.

"Ah! not yet, but going to be. Is it not so, Bruce?"

He hung his head, then he looked up.

"Never mind Blanche," he said hoarsely, "tell me what you meant by my being false to you. What lies have they told you? Great Heaven, what is this mystery which has wrecked and ruined both our lives? What have they told you?"

She came nearer.

"Bruce," mournfully, "what they told me would have mattered little, but—I saw for myself!"

"Saw for yourself! Saw what?" he demanded.

She turned her head away.

"Bruce, I—I was in the greenhouse on the afternoon you came back from Scarfross to meet Lady Blanche, and saw and heard all that passed between you! Oh, Bruce, Heaven forgive you as—I—I have done!" and the tears welled to her eyes.

There was silence for a moment, silence broken by an awful oath.

She started and turned to him. He had flung the gate open and stood before her, his eyes blazing into hers, his lips set.

"Are you mad?" he cried, almost inaudibly. "Floris, look at me! Look at me! I say!"

She raised her eyes to his fearlessly, though there was something awful in the expression of his face.

"Now tell me, slowly, carefully, what you mean, what you think you saw."

She opened her lips once, twice; the scene came back in all its force and shook her to the soul.

"Bruce, I saw you at her feet. I heard you implore her to fly with you. I heard you tell her that you had never loved—loved—any other than her! I heard you say that I—oh, I cannot go on! Spare me!"

"You saw—you heard!" he said, his face close to hers. "Great Heaven! am I going mad! When was this?"

"The day you left Ballyfloe for Scarfross. Ah! have you no pity on me, no mercy?"

"The day I left Ballyfloe!" he repeated, disregarding her entreaty. "You say I came back to Ballyfloe—that I saw Blanche? It is a lie! Do you hear? It is a lie! Whoever told you—but you saw me, you say? Floris, let me look at you! Is this my Floris who stands here and tells me this? Am I mad—are we both mad? Merciful Heaven, what does it mean? Listen to me!" and he drew her closer to him by her arm, so close that his hot breath fanned her cheek. "Listen to me as if the words I am going to speak were those of a dying man! Floris, you could not have seen me on that day——you did not see me, as you describe it, on any day, at that time; but on that day! —I tell you solemnly, here face to face, with Heaven above us to hear me, that I did not come back to Ballyfloe that day!"

She panted, and drew back her head to gaze at him.

"Bruce!"

"I did not come back," he repeated, in a frenzied voice; "I went straight to Scarfross! Great Heaven!—do you doubt me! A dozen witnesses can prove it! There were men whose side I never left, Lord Harry.—Donald! Go back!—why I did not go back for weeks; I was nearly killed the following morning—"

"Ah!" she breathed, her breath coming in quick gasps.

"—Was struck down by a stag, and kept at Scarfross for weeks confined to my bed—to my room. All this can be proved! Are you listening? Why do you stare at me so?"

"Then—then, that is why you did not write?" she gasped, and awful sense of mystery enwrapping her.

"Yes! At first I was senseless for days; unable to write for weeks. When I was able, they told me that you had—had fled with Bertie! Now do you understand that you cannot have seen me with Blanche, as you suppose?"

She uttered a cry of despair.

"Bruce, I saw you——"

"Great Heaven! I shall go mad!"

"And if it was not you,—who was it?"

He looked at her scared, frightened face.

"Who was it? I saw you—heard you speak to her. The girl Josine——"

"Josine!" he muttered.

"Josine told me that I should do so; led me to the place; stood beside me. If you speak of proof,—ask her. Oh, Bruce! and yet—and yet——"

He laughed grimly, savagely.

"And yet you think I speak the truth. My poor Floris! My brain is reeling! There is some devilish mystery at the bottom of this! What it is, Heaven only knows; but I will learn. The girl Josine, you say,—where is she? and Blanche——"

"Who told you that I had fled with Lord Clifforde?" asked Floris, suddenly.

"Blanche!" he returned, quickly.

A cold shudder ran through her, and her head drooped.

"Do you mean to say that—" he could not go on for a moment—"that Blanche lied, and purposely deceived me?—deceived both of us?" he said, hoarsely.

She shook her head wearily.

"I do not know! I cannot say! It is all dark, dark to me!"

But there shall be light!" he exclaimed. "Blanche is here in Florence. She shall tell me the truth; the girl Josine, I will wring the truth from her! Oh, my darling! Oh, Floris, my Floris! thank Heaven it is not too late!" and he put out his arms.

She drew back from him, deathly pale, and her lips parted slowly, sadly.

"Too late; it is too late!" she murmured gently. "We cannot bring back the past. It is too late! Think of Blanche, Bruce! She has done no wrong. You—you are to be married to her——"

His hands fell to his side, he turned his face away.

"Why should she suffer? For us Bruce, all is lost, save honor. You must still keep that! There has been some dark mystery; I do not know what it is, no, not even yet; but we have met again too late. Good-bye, Bruce—good-bye. In time, far away in the future, we may meet—" her voice broke, and with a groan he took a step towards her, but she drew still further back—"in time you and I will meet as friends,—dear true friends,—but no more, Bruce. Good-bye!"

She put out her hand as she spoke, and he seized it and held it.

"Good-bye?" he cried hoarsely. "Do you think I am going to let you go like this? No! Floris you are mine—you love me still——"

"Ah, yes," she breathed, the tears running down her sweet face; "I love you still; but it is because of that we must part. Stand firm by your honor, Bruce; do not play Lady Blanche false as—as—I once thought that you had played me. Good-bye!"

He caught her hand to his lips and kissed it passionately, his hot lips burning it, and with a cry of mingled pain and joy that he should so kiss her, she drew her hand away, and vanished.

* * * * * *

Lady Blanche, recoiling against the balcony, gazed up at the wan, haggard face with the black, sombre eyes glowing like lamps amidst its whiteness.

"What are you doing here?" she gasped. "What do you want with me?"

He looked down at her with a fixed, intent expression on his face, as if he were looking through her, like a man playing some difficult part, and trying to remember it. The look haunted her for years afterwards.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE BRIDAL CAKE.—The prominence attached to bridecake in the marriage ceremonies of our own and other countries is one of those interesting survivals of early symbolical customs which have been transmitted to us from the distant past. Indeed, a wedding feast without the time-honored bridecake would be considered, by almost general consent, thoroughly incomplete; and he would be a bold person who should even so much as dare to suggest its omission on this festive occasion.

So universal, too, is the practice of connecting bridecake with our marriage rites that even the poorest country peasant contrives to deck the nuptial board—however frugal the fare may be upon it—with this necessary adjunct. It may naturally be asked, therefore, why the bridecake should be invested with so much superstitious reverence as to render its absence at the marriage feast, in the eyes of most persons an ominous and ill-starred affair.

The answer to this question, says a contemporary, like the origin of so many other of our social customs, has given rise to various conjectures. Thus, according to one popular explanation, we have in the bridecake a survival of the old Roman form of marriage by "Confarreatio," or eating together.

It appears that at a marriage ceremony of this kind, offerings of a cake and a sheep were made to the gods. The skin of the sheep was spread over two chairs, upon which the bride and bridegroom sat down, with their heads uncovered. Then the marriage was completed in the presence of Pontifex Maximus and ten witnesses; after which another sacrifice was offered. A cake was made of far and mola salsa by vestal virgins, and was carried before the bride when she was conducted to the residence of her husband. It is by no means clear, however, that we have adopted the custom from the Romans, inasmuch as the same practice, under various forms, has existed from time immemorial among remote savages or semi-civilised people, who cannot be supposed to have obtained it from the Romans.

Thus, Sir John Lubbock, in his Origin of Civilization," tells us how, among the Iroquois, the bride and bridegroom used to partake together of a cake of "Sagamite," which the bride offered to her husband. The Fiji Islanders have a very similar custom. Among the Tipperahs, one of the hill tribes of Chittagong, the bride prepares some drink, sits on her lover's knee, drinks half, and gives him the other half; they afterwards crook together their little fingers. In one form or another a similar custom is found among most of the hill tribes of India.

The true derivation of the bridecake, therefore, is probably to be sought, not so much in the old Roman marriage rite of "Confarreatio" as in its symbolical nature, corn in one form or another—either in whole grains, or made up into a cake or biscuit—having been from a very remote period in the world's history regarded as the emblem of plenty and prosperity.

Among the Liburnians, before the dinner was over, the bride and all the guests rose from the table, and she threw over the roof of the bridegroom's house a cake called "kolarh," which was made of coarse dough. The higher she threw it the happier it was supposed would the marriage be, and, as the houses were low and the cake hard, the bride seldom failed to insure a lucky omen.

According to an Esthonian wedding costume, a can of beer is poured over the bridegroom's horse, and a handful of rye is scattered over the heads of the bridal couple for good luck's sake.

In Sweden the bride has her pockets filled with bread, it being a popular belief that every piece she gives to the poor on her way to church will avert some misfortune.

In eastern countries, rice, which is the staple food, is substituted, and holds a prominent place in the nuptial ceremony. Thus, on the Malabar coast of India, the priest sprinkles the bride and bridegroom with rice; and among the Brahmins the bridegroom throws three handfuls of rice on the bride's head.

In Java the bride and bridegroom partake of rice out of the same dish to insure good luck. Hence we may trace the practice in our own country of scattering rice on the bridle couple.

In Italy the mother of a newly married man, on his arrival home with his wife, throws some rice behind the back of the bride.

Without enumerating further illustrations, it is evident that the idea of corn in some form as an emblem of prosperity has been most extensively interwoven with the marriage ceremonies of most nations, to which, therefore, may probably be ascribed the reverence attached to our bridecake.

THE TRUE.

Love that can only love when life is fair and bright,
And full of radiant glory and decked in golden light,
When, hand in hand, united hearts go down the path of time,
And love and pleasure guide their steps in youth's sweet morning prime—
Is this true love?

Love that at one cold glance will wither up and die,
Love that is never great, save 'neath a sunny sky,
Love that can love in joy, but will fade away in pain,
And leave a sorrowing heart to seek its held in vain—
Is this true love?

Ah, no! true, faithful love through weal or woe will bide,
Will strengthen in sorrow, be at the mourning side;
Love that is strong and patient, though storms of grief are near;
That will love though all be shipwreck, and life dark and drear—
This is true love!

A Wife's Martyrdom.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

A BEAUTIFUL evening in August, when the summer is at its fairest and all nature at its brightest; when the fruit hangs ripe and luscious in the orchards and the wheat stands in the fields, and the earth yields its precious products with unstinted hand; when the world seems all sunshine, fragrance, and color.

The grand old Abbey had never looked more beautiful than it did this brilliant evening.

The sun was setting in the golden west, and the light fell full upon the stately pile—on the arched windows, on the ivy-clad walls and the fine old towers.

One could not look at the Abbey on this August evening without thinking of its ancient glories, and feeling what a halo of poetry and romance was over those ancient walls.

This was the evening on which bride and bridegroom were expected home.

Letters had been received from them announcing their intended return.

Lady Laura Wynyard had written regularly to her daughter.

The Swiss lakes were perfection in her eyes, Geneva and Lucerne, Zurich and Interlachen, delightful places of resort; the scenery was magnificent, the weather all that could be desired, the tour most enjoyable.

But above and before all was her husband, the most perfect of men, the kindest, the best, the dearest; there was no other like him; and she was quite sure that, when Angela knew him better, she too would love him, all of which Angela dismissed with a sigh.

It was natural enough for her mother to write in this strain; but she could not bear to read it.

The last letter said they would return on the twentieth of August, when everything must be in readiness, and a recherche dinner prepared for the Captain.

Lady Laura Wynyard was not in the least disenchanted with respect to her idol; but she had made the discovery that a very good dinner was a great consolation to him.

Miss Jameson smiled quietly when Angela read that portion to her.

"I will see the housekeeper," she said. "I understand what will please a gentleman better than you do."

Angela was glad to be relieved of the duty.

"I remember what papa liked," she remarked, with a sigh; "but his tastes were very simple."

"Simplicity of taste does not characterise the Captain," said Miss Jameson quietly; and then she went to give instructions to the housekeeper.

The whole household were delighted at their mistress's marriage.

Many of the servants still remained who had been there in Sir Charles's lifetime.

The housekeeper, a stately and imposing personage, who had always considered Sir Charles in every sense of the word a model man, was delighted that her ladyship was married again, and hoped the Captain would be like the old master.

The butler too, whose hair had grown gray in the service of the family, was well pleased.

"It will be like old times," he said to himself; but he had heard a few stories of the Captain's wild doings, and he hoped her ladyship would keep a tight hand on the reins.

As the time drew near, Angela went out to take her last look at the home that she felt would be home no more.

She walked slowly down to the great gates of the Abbey, and gazed down the long and beautiful avenue of chestnuts, her father's favorite promenade.

It seemed to her almost as though she could see his tall figure and handsome face under the spreading boughs.

She looked at the deep swift river, and thought of the boating and the feeding he had so enjoyed.

There was the boat-house that he had designed and built.

Every nook and corner, every tree and flower, seemed to speak of him.

It was he who had arranged the handsome vases on the terraces which were filled with choice flowers.

It was he who had planned the grouping of the fountains, he who had guarded the fine old trees so jealously.

Everything spoke of him, of his love and taste. And now——

In a few hours more his successor would be here, the man whom her mother had put in his place, the man whose heart was given to another woman.

It seemed impossible for her fully to realise the greatness of the change.

Some one in her father's place, lounging under the lordly chestnuts, sitting by the fountains, walking on the lawn and the terraces, giving orders about the gardens and the flowers, and that man the one she disliked above every other in the wide world!

She began to realise dimly what her life would be under the continual restraint of his presence.

She gave one long lingering look at the places she had loved so well.

Under the spreading boughs of the cedar stood the chair her father had always used, where he had nursed her for long sunny hours when she was a child.

Farewell to it all, to the happiness that would never return!

She went indoors with a heavy heart. The pleased and expectant faces of the servants the air of preparation and festivity that pervaded the whole mansion, she felt almost as a wrong done to herself.

"If it were but my father coming back," she sighed to herself; and then Miss Jameson came to tell her it was time to dress.

She was in the drawing-room, looking very lovely, when the carriage drove up to the great gates.

She heard it plainly enough in the stillness of the summer evening, and her heart began to beat wildly, beat as it had never done before.

Her whole frame trembled, her face grew deadly white. Miss Jameson, in her calm kindly manner, went up to her.

"You will come to the entrance-hall?" she said; but the girl looked at her with strange wild eyes. "My dear," continued Miss Jameson, "this will not do. You must rouse yourself. Do not distress your mamma on the first evening of her return. Rouse yourself, and come with me."

They reached the hall just as Captain and Lady Laura Wynyard entered.

All the servants were assembled to greet the new master, and the scene was a very pretty and animated one.

In everything it was plain that her ladyship gave way to the Captain.

She made every one understand that he was to be master, which was a very different thing from herself being mistress.

"Why, Angela," she cried, when the slender white-robed figure hastened to her, "you seem to have grown, my dear!"

"Oh, mamma, how glad I am to see you!" and Angela kissed the beautiful face again and again. "Let me look at you, mamma. You have a lovely color, and you look so well and so happy!"

Lady Laura Wynyard was a picture of health and beauty.

She was radiantly happy, and her daughter's words delighted her.

"Do not forget the Captain," she said; but, before she had finished the words, the Captain was by Angela's side.

"Well, Angela," he said, "you see I have obeyed your commands. I have brought back your mother, looking well and happy as when she went, indeed I may claim for myself that she looks far better."

"I see that she does," agreed Angela.

"Give me my reward," he continued; and, before she knew what he was doing, he bent down and kissed her.

"That is right," said Lady Wynyard; "I wished to see you two good friends."

But Angela knew it was a Judas kiss, and she would fain have brushed it from her face.

Then Lady Laura went to her room, with a gracious word to all as she went, saying how bright and beautiful everything looked and how pleased she was to be at home again.

"You will come to me in half an hour," she said to Angela. "I have so much to tell you."

Angela thought to herself that she would like to go then; but the Captain was speaking, and common civility compelled her to listen.

When her first bewilderment had worn off, Angela saw at once the change in him; he looked now as he felt—master.

There was no deference, no attempt at conciliation, no seeking for her good opinion.

He was triumphant, and she at his mercy.

"A fine old place this," he said carelessly—he had not seen the Abbey before—"fine, but very old, and somewhat gloomy."

"Gloomy!" she repeated, in wonder. "Why, there is not a brighter house in England! It is always full of sunshine."

"It would be much improved if some of this stained glass were taken away," he said.

"The stained glass!" cried Angela very indignantly. "Why, that would be sacrilege!"

"Such sacrilege is very common in these days," laughed the Captain, as he went to dress; and the look on his face said plainly, "I am master here.

CHAPTER XVI.

SEPTEMBER, with its balmy days and lovely nights, had come; and the dashing Captain, who had been so long adored of London society, began to feel somewhat tired of his earthly paradise.

More than once he ventured to suggest the necessity of running up to town on business; but at the very mention of the project Lady Laura, who grew more deeply in love with him every day, would throw her arms about his neck and say that it was too soon for him to leave her, and that, if he went to town, she must go with him; and then the Captain, with a wry face, would defer his trip to town on business a trifle longer.

The whole aspect of life at Rood Abbey was completely changed.

The Captain seemed to monopolise all authority, and Lady Laura took the greatest possible pride in confiding everything to him.

He was in every sense of the word master of the house; and never was master more absolute.

He did nothing which could in any way jar upon the old servants; but he let them plainly see that neither old customs, old habits, nor anything else mattered to him: he intended to be obeyed.

It was he who suggested that Miss Jameson should remain with them for a time, to palliate what he called "the awkwardness of a trio."

"Two are company, my angel," he whispered to his flattered wife, "as you well remember—think of Geneva and Lucerne—but three, and one of them a young lady very difficult to get on with, are too many. Let Miss Jameson stay."

And Lady Laura consented gladly, for she persuaded herself that he wanted a companion for Angela, so that he might have her more to himself.

The presence of Miss Jameson had been an immense relief to Angela.

She had dreaded the meals partaken of with the Captain and her mother; she could never endure conversation with him.

Now, with Miss Jameson present, the conversation would be more general, and she need never speak to him unless compelled.

Indeed to Angela the presence of Miss Jameson simplified matters wonderfully.

The Captain drove out with his wife, while Angela preferred to walk with Miss Jameson.

After a few days, they had settled down to their new mode of life: and Angela confessed that it was not so terrible as she had feared.

The pain that her step-father's presence gave her began to wear off, and, though she felt that she could never like him, she found that she was able to tolerate him.

The first time she saw him in her father's place at the table a pang of jealousy shot through her heart.

The first time he flung himself into her father's favorite chair, and announced that fact that it was so very comfortable that he intended to keep it for his own particular use, her face flushed, and words that would have stung him trembled on her lips; but she wisely restrained them.

The first time that the aroma of a cigar, borne by the clear morning air, reached her from the terrace, it brought her father so vividly to her mind that she cried aloud with pain; but, after a time, the bitterness of these reminders were away.

It was no longer home as it had been. She saw but little of her mother; the close companionship of many years was at an end.

But her ladyship was kind to her, and, when not absolutely engaged or engrossed with her husband, spent her time with Angela.

She did not see so much of the Captain as she had anticipated, for she had her own suite of rooms, and remained in them as much as possible, so that the change was not so great or so oppressive as she had expected.

The Captain, who was quite unaccustomed to quiet home-life, by the month of September felt weary of his domestic bliss. He had suggested dinner-parties, balls, even pic-nics, but in vain.

Lady Laura clung to him with the same entreaty—"Let me have you to myself for a short time, Vance. When we begin to give balls and parties, you will always be engaged"—words that would have been sweet enough if he had loved his wife; but, as he did not, they only annoyed him.

"I do not know which tires me most," he said to himself—"a kiss from my wife or a scratch from my step-daughter."

The harvest-moon was now shining in full splendor, but the Captain was satisfied with the beauties of the country.

"I shall not want to see it again for years," he said, with a sigh; "I was never meant for rural felicity."

Yet, as he said the words, there rose before him a beautiful passionate face.

If he had been with her, the quiet country would have held every charm for him. But it was of no use thinking of that now.

At length the Captain, without consulting his wife, announced his intention of giving a ball.

"We must have a little gaiety, Laura darling," he said; "we are becoming quite melancholy. Besides, it is cruel to hide that beautiful face of yours from the world; and Angela must be dull. Let us give a grand ball, just to wake up the neighborhood."

"If you wish it," she consented; but he saw a shadow fall over the brightness of her face, and he knew that she did not like it.

"I think it will be better for all of us," he went on. "It does not do to become so engrossed in each other; and we must not forget that the world has some claim on us. Tell me why you object to my suggestion—for object I see you do."

"I do not object, Vance; but I have a presentiment that, when we make this change in our lives, we shall never be really happy again."

"What nonsense, Laura!"

The Captain spoke sharply for the first time to his infatuated wife; but she clung to him, with tears in her eyes.

"Is it nonsense, Vance? Shall you let the world get between us when we go back to it?"

"Certainly not," he replied, kissing the wistful upturned face; but he knew well he was only longing for one glimpse of the woman he loved, for excitement to help him to forget the loveless union he had contracted.

So it was settled, and the invitations were issued.

Once more the old mansion woke to a very intoxication of gaiety; and it was during that first and most brilliant ball that Lady Laura Wynyard found there were many things in life of which she had hitherto known nothing.

She had never been absolutely jealous. Her first husband had treated her with such loving tenderness that the feeling had never been awakened in her heart. She had felt the first symptoms of jealousy when Angela told her that the Captain loved Gladys Rane; since then it had lain dormant; there had been nothing to arouse it.

But on this the night of the ball the Captain looked so gallant and so handsome that she thought every woman in the room must find him irresistible, as she herself did.

The Captain owned to himself that there was no handsomer woman in the room, while Lady Laura looked with anxious eye at the many fair young faces.

"Vance," she said, "there are a great many pretty faces here to-night."

"Yes; they are pleasant to gaze upon," he observed.

Then she looked up at him with laughing eyes, the wistfulness of which he did not see.

"Vance, you must not admire them: you must not flirt with anybody, for I am jealous of your every smile."

"My dear Laura," said the Captain gallantly, "you are the most beautiful woman in the room. If I flirt with one, it will be with you."

Then he added to himself, "My reward for that speech ought to be a waltz with every pretty girl in the room."

Husband and wife were standing together when Angela entered the ball-room. She had never looked more beautiful than now.

Her tall slender figure showed to the greatest advantage in a dress of rich white silk elaborately trimmed with fine lace; her lovely face and dark eyes commanded admiration.

"How beautiful that girl looks to-night!" remarked the Captain to his wife. "After all, there is nothing like the beauty of youth."

He spoke without thinking, and the words seemed to disturb her ladyship so much that her face grew pale.

"The beauty of what, Vance? I thought you said no woman could be perfectly beautiful under thirty?"

"My dearest Laura, I repeat that you are the fairest woman in the room. Now we must go and do our duty-dances; then we can enjoy ourselves."

But during the evening her ladyship's eyes followed her husband incessantly. She longed to withdraw him from the company of the young and pretty girls he courted so persistently and monopolise him herself.

"Do dance with me!" she besought him once during the evening. "It makes me jealous to see you so attentive to those pretty girls."

"Never cultivate jealousy, Laura," said the Captain laughingly.

"True," returned his wife. "But dance once with me, Vance."

"My dear, every one would laugh at us," he answered. "I would do anything to please you, but not that."

"Many men dance with their wives," she said coaxingly.

"I never shall," he returned good-humoredly. "It is bad form, Laura, and I dislike anything of that kind. Pray say no more about it."

And the Captain, who had been out of society during his short married life, enjoyed himself thoroughly with the youth and beauty around him.

He danced with the prettiest girls in the room, several times with one or two of them, and Lady Laura's loving, longing eyes followed him wistfully.

"Angel," she said the next day to her daughter, "did you think the Captain seemed unduly attentive to any one last night? Some of our young guests were very pretty."

"No, mamma, I did not," she replied; and the anxious face lightened.

"He is so handsome," said the weak loving woman.

"And you are so beautiful, mamma," was Angela's half-indignant rejoinder.

She was determined not to admit that the Captain had any physical advantage over her mother.

"I do not know how it was, Angel," she continued; "but all at once last night I seemed suddenly to grow old and feel old."

"You never looked better in your life, mamma," Angela assured her mother hastily.

"I should not like to lose my beauty," sighed Lady Laura. "And you see I am very happy—much happier than you thought I should be, Angela."

"Thank Heaven for that, darling mother!" said the girl gently; but in her heart she felt that all was not well.

CHAPTER XVII.

VANCE WYNYARD found the autumn long; and the winter dragged still more monotonously. However, he managed to get through them by dint of continued gaieties.

There seemed to be no end to them. There were fancy-balls, private theatricals, charade-parties, dinner-parties—hardly a day passed without something of the kind; and Rood Abbey soon became as famous for its hospitality as it was for its natural charms.

The Captain lost none of his popularity as master of Rood Abbey, and it was generally agreed that Lady Laura had done a wise thing in marrying him; she was just then the most envied woman in the country. By forcing excitement the Captain managed to tolerate his new mode of existence.

Yet, even with all these consolations, he found it hard, and he vowed to himself that this state of things should not occur again. Next year he would fill the house with his own friends—men of his own stamp, and women who knew how to be amusing.

"My wife is beautiful and sweet-tempered; but she has not an idea beyond looking pretty and being admired. I should like a little less love and a little more wit," he often said to himself.

The plain truth was that in six months he had completely tired of the wife when he had married for money.

He was tired of her fair beauty, tired of the sweetness of her manner, tired of her unvarying amiability; above all, he was unutterably bored by her passionate worship of himself, although she had not yet found it out.

It would have been perfectly useless to speak to her or warn her.

Lady Wynyard would perhaps have been happy for a few months longer if she had loved her husband less, or if she had refrained from showing her passionate worship of him.

As it was, she, as he phrased it to himself bored him most horribly. She was never happy out of his presence; she liked to spend every moment of her time with him; she was jealous and miserable if he paid the least attention to any one else.

No love-sick girl could have shown more unmistakable symptoms of love-fever than she did.

Autumn and winter over now, and Captain Wynyard hailed the spring with unbounded satisfaction.

"Talk of surfeiting a bee with honey!" he said to himself. "I am surfeited with my wife's beauty and adoration."

And there rose before him the fair face of the woman he adored and had forsaken, the one woman of whom he never tired.

Lady Laura had offered some feeble resistance when the proposal to spend the season in London was first discussed.

It was at the beginning of April, and the primroses were all out, the grass was of the loveliest and most tender green, the buds were forming on the trees, the odor of sweet violets filled the air.

"Rood is so charming just now," she said to her husband; "I wish we were going to spend the spring here."

"I should be very sorry," laughed the Captain. "I have had enough of rural life to last me for some time."

His wife looked up at him with something like adoration in her eyes.

"I thought you said, Vance, that all places were alike to you when you were with me?"

"They are indeed, my dear," he replied; and she was quite content."

The next time the question was discussed the Captain "laid down the law" in his own fashion. In the summer he intended to go abroad for a short time; and, when they returned to the Abbey, he should bring a party of friends with him. And her ladyship yielded without one word of protest.

The soft April winds were blowing, the soft April showers were falling, when they left Rood.

The primroses gleamed like gold at the feet of the budding trees, all nature was donning its greenest garb.

"There will be nothing in London like this," sighed Angela.

The Captain laughed mockingly.

"No," he said, "but there will be something a thousand times better. I would rather have one hour in London than a month in the country—

"'Better fifty years of Europe
Than a cycle of Cathay.'"

"I am not surprised to hear you say so," replied Angela. "I can imagine that London life is more to your taste than that of the country."

"Yes," confessed the Captain, who was in the highest possible spirits at the prospect before him; "I find my paradise there. Clubs, theatres, dances, are things I delight in."

The Captain was unusually elated, so much so as to be quite genial with Angela.

Miss Jamison was not going with them, as the Captain foresaw that there would be no need of a fourth person in London.

He would not be troubled with his wife's society there.

Naturally mother and daughter would go out together, and he would be free to pursue his own course unmolested.

He was elated too when he thought of the prospect before him.

He would be master of one of the finest houses in London, he would have the command of a large income, he would be free to do just what he would—for his wife never seriously opposed his wishes—above all, he would see Gladys Rane.

He was very kind and attentive to his wife during the journey to town, and, on arriving at Rood House, they found it looking its brightest.

The balconies were already full of flowers, everything had been specially prepared for their comfort, and the Captain sighed with the deepest satisfaction over the *recherche* dinner prepared by a Parisian cook.

"This looks like home," he said—"much more than the Abbey."

He liked to remember that the clubs and the theatres were open and within easy reach, and that night, which to him had been all that was melancholy and unendurable in the country, would here in town be a dream of delight.

There was one thing to which he had thoroughly made up his mind before coming to London.

He had thoughtfully considered the matter and was satisfied that it should be no longer delayed.

Indeed he would have been pleased to see it arranged long before; but it seemed to him wiser and more diplomatic to wait.

He had resolved, before the pleasures and gaieties of the season began, that his wife should make her will.

He would have asked her to make it while they were at Rood; but there would have been the trouble of sending for Mr. Sansome.

He knew that his wife would not employ any other lawyer, and now, during the first few hours of his return to town, he thought of nothing but this.

After breakfast on the second day of their arrival, Captain Wynyard went up to his wife's boudoir. He found Angela there.

"I wish to speak to your mother," he said; and Angela rose to leave them together.

As she passed him, she looked into his face, and he flushed crimson as she did so. His eyes fell before her searching glance.

"He is going to persuade my mother to do something wrong or foolish," she said to herself; "I can read it in his face. What can it be?"

The interview was a long one, and, when Angela returned to her mother's boudoir, they had both left it.

The captain opened his mission with great tact and diplomacy.

"How bright and beautiful the house looks Laura!" he said. "My heart warms to it. I like Rood House better than the Abbey. What a charming room this is; and what a view you have of the gardens!"

"Yes, I admire this room," said Lady Laura, little dreaming how many hours of bitter suffering she would pass there.

The Captain drew a comfortable chair to the window, and placed a footstool for his wife.

"Now my queen," he said, "I want to talk to you sensibly and reasonably. To begin with, Laura—do you trust me?"

"Trust you?" she echoed. "Implicitly, and with my whole heart!"

"I knew you did, Laura; and I know you will understand that what I am going to say is quite as much for your sake as my own."

"I am sure of that," she allowed, kissing his handsome face.

"I have never hidden my faults from you Laura," he went on. "You know that I have been a terrible spendthrift, and have wasted two large fortunes."

"Never mind, dear," she; "we have plenty for both of us."

"Yes, I know that, and that is one of my grievances. You have Rood Abbey, Rood House, and a clear income of fifteen thousand per annum. I managed to save eight hundred a year from the wreck of my fortune. It seems a very small sum. Do you know, Laura, if I had realized this great disproportion in our financial positions, I should never have had the courage to ask you to marry me; but, I was so deeply in love with you that the money side of the question never entered my mind."

And Lady Laura believed him.

She was honestly grieved to think how mistaken Angela had been, and how cruelly she had misjudged this noble generous man.

Her ladyship was so delighted with his words that she rose from her chair and put her arms round his neck and kissed him.

"You are one of the noblest men in the world, Vance!" she murmured.

"And you, my love, are the most beautiful and generous of women," he replied.

Nevertheless he unclasped the arms of the most beautiful and generous of women, and led her back to her seat.

He had no fear now; while she was in this frame of mind he could go on, with every prospect of success.

"I want to speak to you very seriously about our affairs," he continued. "Of course, in a love-marriage like ours, it does not matter which has the control of the finances. If I had much money, I should spend it all on you; you, having a great deal, in the generosity of your heart enjoy spending it on me. But what I want to speak about very seriously to you is this. Have you made your will, Laura?"

She looked up at him with a scared, startled face.

"My will!" she echoed. "No, Vance; I have never thought of it."

And the first link in a chain of tragedy was forged when Captain Wynyard unfolded his views on that subject to his wife.

"I cannot imagine," said Captain Wynyard to his wife, "why I have not spoken of this before. Your will should have been made before our marriage. However, having neglected the matter so long, it should be attended to at once."

"You make me feel quite nervous, Vance," faltered Lady Laura.

"There is no need for that, my dear," he said kindly. "Your lawyer, Mr. Sansome, ought to have suggested the making of your will. It may seem strange coming from me."

There was, what she did not observe, a strange hesitancy about the Captain's manner.

He looked paler than usual, and his hands trembled. As he proceeded, his lips seemed to stiffen and his usual fluency of speech to desert him.

"You have told me all about your first husband's will," he continued. "Sir Charles certainly showed unlimited trust and confidence in placing such a large fortune at your disposal."

"It is not quite that," she replied. "It all goes to Angela at my death. I cannot touch the capital; nor can I sell a tree or a picture. The property is absolutely mine, yet not mine."

"Yes, I know; I understand. Of course it all goes to Angela at your death, which we all pray may be far distant; but what will Angela do with it, do you suppose?"

"She will marry, and leave it to her children, I imagine."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BEAR'S MEAT.—The Polar bear has quite a varied diet, depending on the season and his whereabouts. If near a country whose waters abound in seal, this is his main sustenance; and the cleverness he displays in catching them is wonderful: for the Eskimo considers the seal the wariest and slyest game in his country, and especially in the Summer time when the polar bear secures the most.

When a seal comes up through the thick ice on a pleasant Summer day, he is quite wary at first as he stretches himself for a comfortable snooze on the ice so close to his hole that the slightest motion of his body will send him over the slippery edge, and with a stroke or two of his fins and a splash of his tail, he is out of sight beneath the ice again.

Having kept a sharp lookout in every direction for a number of minutes, and seeing nothing suspicious, he allows his heavy head to fall on the ice to take a nap; but they are short naps indeed, and every two or three minutes he raises his head and surveys the surroundings for probable mischief.

The polar bear, seeing these movements from the top of some high hummock of ice, crawls stealthily on his prey, taking advantage as much as possible of every little piece of rough ice to conceal his figure, already well protected by his white color on the ice.

Having gotten as near as he possibly can by such methods, he lies flat on the ice, and commences "hitching" himself along by short, spasmodic actions, watching the seal keenly all the while. Should it look up from its slumbers, the bear remains as motionless as a piece of ice, for which he hopes to be taken by this ruse, until the seal throws his head down again, when he once more commences "hitching" forward.

By this series of very slow and laborious creepings, he manages to get within some twenty feet of his victim, when, watching his best opportunity when the seal is in the midst of one of his short slumbers, he makes a quick rush, striking it over the head with his paw, and grasping it by the neck with his teeth.

A single miscalculation in this scheme, and the seal is below the ice through his hole, dashing a mass of spray in Mr. Bruin's face with his pliant tail.

Should the seal have crawled up on the edge of an ice-floe from the water, and attempt to escape thereto, the bear being close upon him, the latter will not hesitate—so the Eskimo say—to dive after the seal; and although in the water the seal is his superior in activity, occasionally the bear is rewarded with his prey by a lucky snap of his jaws.

The polar bear is credited with killing walrus; but I think he never attacks any but the smaller ones in a fair combat, so much larger is the walrus than his bearship. The Eskimo claim—and I think their story is true—that the polar bear has been known to take a stone or huge piece of ice in his forepaws, and, from a favorable attitude—the side of an iceberg or the top of a cliff—hurl this missile with such certainty as to alight on a walrus's head, and so stun it that its capture became easy afterwards.

TURKISH LOVE OF WATER.—A Turk thinks he can do nothing so grateful to God and man as the setting up of a fountain by the roadside or in the streets of the city, where the wayfarer and his animals may appease their thirst and bless the name of him who provided for their wants.

Often in my travels, says a correspondent I have halted beneath the shade of a wide-spreading plane tree to slake my thirst at the limpid waters of a marble fountain, and to repose from the noonday heat. There is always some edifying distich from the Koran, that "Water is the gift of God, and blessed is he who distributes it," or that "Water is the source of health and life," etc. There is a practical piety in these monuments of charity that speaks well for the benevolent disposition of the Mussulman. The Turks are great consumers of water, and they are good judges of its quality and nice in what they use.

The favorite water that is sold at a para a glass in the streets is from Asia. This is brought to the landing in barrels, on horses' backs, put in barges, and in this way carried to Constantinople before daylight. Notwithstanding the length of the journey, it is as clear as crystal. The vendors cry it as "good as ice." A pasha will use two goblets at a swallow.

As water is said to have fattening properties, the large draughts they take of it may be the cause, in part, of the obesity to which both sexes of the Turks are subject.

Scientific and Useful.

THEATRE CHAIRS.—The Paris Vaudeville Theatre has just adapted a very clever invention, by means of which each seat can be at once folded up into the thickness of three inches, rest for the arms and all; likewise a hat stand and a cane stand.

THE BRAIN.—Recent analysis shows that the fatty substance of the brain is not as was supposed, composed of glycerine, but of palmatin, an element of which oatmeal contains a large percentage, and which is therefore a better brain nutriment than wheat meal.

PAINTS ON IRON.—Experiments with various paints on iron plates prove that red lead paints resist atmospheric influences better than those of brown red and iron oxides. Better results were produced when the plates were pickled in muriatic acid, washed with water, thoroughly dried, and, while warm, oiled before the paint was applied.

SOLDIER'S SHIELD.—The proposition is said to be seriously entertained to arm the British infantry soldier with a shield. The new implement has a surface a foot square, is bullet proof, weighs but three pounds, and is attached to the rifle. When skirmishers are thrown out they can thus carry their own cover with them, while, by fixing the extreme point of the shield in the ground, they will not only be protected when firing, but will have a rest for their rifles.

FLOATING HOSPITALS.—An English scientist has shown to the authorities there a scheme for a floating infectious diseases hospital of novel construction. He proposes to float the hospital upon circular pontoons 10 feet apart, with a platform of iron and timber 4 feet above high-water level. There are to be three large wards, with 10 beds each. The wards are to be of wood, with a double skin, and the roof is to be of zinc or wood. There is to be a space on the platform for the future erection of the administration block. The estimated cost is $20,000.

LIFE LINES.—The New York Fire Department have recently made a series of experiments with several new appliances for projecting life lines over burning buildings with a view to test its merits. The experiments were made on the "Palisades" of the Hudson River. The appliances consisted of rocket-firing guns; the life line being attached to the missile. Some of these urged the projectile by the explosive force of gunpowder, and one by compressed air; but no device employing the tension of a spring or india-rubber was shown. Lines varying in length from 200 feet to nearly 700 feet, were thus cast over the cliffs of the Palisades.

Farm and Garden.

CATTLE.—Before slaughtering an animal withhold all food from it for twenty-four hours but allow all the water it will drink. This course betters the meat all round.

CORN CRIBS.—Cribs for corn may be made rat-proof by setting the building on posts with a tin pan shelving out on every side from the top. Of course the crib should be detached from all other buildings, and not touched by any fence. By clearing out all the corn once a year in such a building, neither rats nor mice will become very numerous.

POULTRY.—Poultry should have plenty light. It is a rather significant fact that the laying season with most fowls is during the time of year when the days are longest. Make them as warm as possible in winter, but do not do it by confining hens in dark and damp places, which engender disease. If possible have south windows, so that hens may get sunshine in the middle of the day.

SLIPS.—Slips or cuttings of geraniums and other succulent plants can easily be rooted by the most inexperienced. Break the slip in such a manner as to leave it hanging from the parent plant by a small piece of skin or bark for a week or more before entirely severing it. The small ligament serves to supply the slip with sufficient nourishment, until the broken end is calloused over and ready to strike root as soon as planted.

KICKING BRACE.—A horse cannot kick if his head is kept up, and hence a "kicking brace" will sometimes prove a correction of the habit. This brace is made of half-inch iron, with a fork at one end and a ring in each end of the fork, each ring being furnished with a snap, or with a strap, and buckle, by which it may be attached to the bit, the opposite end of the brace being made to fit upon the front of the lower part of the collar by a similar fork fitted with a strap. The length of the brace must be adjusted to the size of the horse, the point being to keep the head well up.

SHIPPING.—In shipping butter in tubs, use only new tubs; in regard to firkins, use neat and strong chests, and see that the trays are cleaned, dried and sunned well before each shipment. Use clean and new butter rags only, not any old rag that happens to lay about the house and cannot be put to any other use than to help fill the rag bag. It may save a few pennies at first to use such rags, but it will be at the expense of a lower price for the butter. As buyers all call for butter of a good color, nearly all butter-makers use butter-color, which is neither objectionable nor injurious if properly used. There are but few dairies which can and do color up the butter uniformly well throughout the entire year.

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To Lead or Follow.

Out of the countless millions of human beings who have dwelt upon the earth, the great multitude have come and gone, and left no mark behind to show that they ever existed. But if you should strike out of the long roll a hundred familiar names—the few that have not been washed away by the tide of oblivion—the whole aspect of the world would be very unlike what it is to-day.

There is a short list of distinguished conquerors who have determined the boundary of nations, of eminent jurists and statesmen who have given form to the constitution of empires, of profound philosophers who have shaped the processes of thought, of earnest men who have founded the religions of the world, of men of science who have revealed the laws of the material universe, of inventors and discoverers who have revolutionized the habits of society.

The advance of mankind is always signalized by the appearance of some great leader, who, by the force of his will and the sagacity of his reason, has given a new impulse and a new direction to the march of the human race. In most cases, he does not seem to be the product of the age, but rather the maker of the age.

"The hour and the man" must be in accordance; the hour may pass by without result if the man is not there, and the man can accomplish nothing if the hour is not propitious. It is a calamity when the multitude misjudge their true leader and refuse to follow him, or when they mistake their leader and offer incense to a charlatan or an idol.

There are a few men who are everwhere known by the title of "great;" and this title would not have adhered to them if they had not been men of power; but there may have been others who better deserved it, if greatness is to be determined by the benefit which other men confer upon the world.

Alexander was a drunkard, Frederick was a tyrant, and Napoleon a selfish usurper; but the hero-worshipper is dazzled and blinded by the brilliancy of their achievements, and he cannot see the spots on the sun.

As the general level of society rises, and society advances in culture, the people become impatient of leadership, and love to call themselves sovereign. The amount of thinking that is now done far exceeds anything known in any former age, and perhaps for this very reason there are few of our contemporaries whose names will descend to posterity clothed with the same honors that distinguished the great philosophers of antiquity.

There is no further call for leadership in the way of founding empires, or forming political constitutions, or establishing religions, but in the line of organizing and directing gigantic national enterprises the demand for men of far-seeing vision, skilful in the device of plans, and energetic and bold in carrying their plans into effect, was never more imperative.

How could we ever have had our steamships, and railroads, and telegraphs, and manufactories, and a hundred other great enterprises that distinguish the age, without some sort of leadership? Those things do not come spontaneously; they are not brought about by holding mass meetings and submitting the matter to a popular vote; the men who live along the sides of the road do not agree together to build it, or leave it with every man to build such a portion as may pass through his territory. Workmen who need employment do not, first of all, combine to build a mill, and stock it and conduct it, and then divide the profits.

They have not the means to do so, and would not know how to go to work if they had; but a few leading men, who have both the money and the brains, invest their money and their brains in the enterprise, and the thing is done. They may be branded with the opprobrious name of capitalists, and denounced as the antagonists of labor, while without them there could be no sufficient field for labor.

They are reprobated as men who live on the earnings of others, and whatever they lay by is said to be stolen from the wages of those in their employ. It is very likely that some of them may grind the faces of the poor, and do all they can to keep down the compensation of the laborer to the lowest possible point. If so, they deserve the hardest words that can be said against them.

If a large mill were carried on entirely by the men and women who work there, they would be obliged to employ somebody as a leader and overseer, and somebody to take general charge of things and see that everything is managed properly; and such a man would expect to be remunerated according to his skill and experience. If he happened to have also paid for the mill, would he not have the right to expect some additional return for the capital invested?

It is a radical mistake to suppose that the suppression of all the leaders in the world, the leveling down of all the men of wealth and station, would tend to the general elevation of society. It would not be wise to remove the mountains for the sake of getting a more equal distribution of rain. Tell men that they shall never be allowed to rise in the world above a certain fixed point, to accumulate only so much as may be needed for their comfortable support, and the great stimulus to individual effort would be destroyed.

There are those who take much pride in saying, "I am as good as anybody else, and I will never look up to any man as my superior." The bramble-bush is not on a level with the cedar because it is unwilling to recognize any difference in height. The frog, with all his swelling, can never become an ox, although he may make more noise in proportion to his size. It is a mark of wisdom when one is willing to honor the true born ruler. Even the birds and the dumb beasts do this.

To be willing to begin at the bottom is the open secret of being able to come out at the top. A few years ago a young man came to this country to take a position in a new enterprise in the Southwest. He was well bred, well educated, and he had the tastes of his birth and education. He reached the scene of his proposed labors, and found, to his dismay, that the enterprise was already bankrupt, and that he was penniless, homeless and friendless in a strange land. He worked his way back to New York, and in midwinter found himself, without money or friends, in the great, busy metropolis. He did not stop to measure the difficulties in his path; he simply set out to find work. He would have preferred the pen, but he was willing to take the shovel; and the shovel it was to be. Passing down one of the avenues on a snowy morning, he found a crowd of men shoveling snow from the sidewalks about a well-known locality; he applied for a position in their ranks, got it, and went to work with a hearty good will, as if shoveling were his vocation. Not long after, one of the owners of the property, a millionaire, passed along the street, saw the young man's face, was struck by its intelligence, and wondered what had brought him to such a pass. A day or two later he passed him again, still shoveling snow. He stopped, spoke to him, received a prompt and courteous reply, talked a few minutes for the sake of getting a few facts about his history, and then asked the young man to call at his office. That night the shovelers ended, and the next day, at the appointed time, the young man was closeted with the millionaire. In one of the latter's many enterprises there was a vacant place, and the young man who was willing to shovel got it. It was a small place at a small salary, but he more than filled it; he filled it so well, indeed, that in a few months he was promoted; and at the end of three years he was at the head of the enterprise, at a large salary. He is there to-day, with the certainty that if he lives he will eventually fill a position second in importance to none in the field in which he is working. The story is told in three words—willing to work.

Some one has well remarked that the sharpest test of a man's character is in his treatment of what is in his power and wholly below him. Motives of self-interest are sufficiently strong and numerous to produce irreproachable conduct toward superiors or equals in strength, or knowledge, or station, or wealth, or intelligence. They have it in their power to defend themselves from our attacks, to bring us to account for our misdoings, to resist injuries, to reward benefits. Much of what renders our lives valuable is in their hands to bestow or withhold. When, therefore, we so order our conduct as to conciliate and please those who can thus control our happiness and welfare, it may be a token of intelligence, but not of noble character. When, however, we come into relations with those who have no such power, who must accept without appeal what we choose to give them, who have no more substantial reward to bestow than gratitude or affection, and no severer penalty than secret and impotent wrath, we show something of our true selves by the way in which we treat them.

The greatest art—not duty—which women have yet to learn is, says a living writer, how to make the best use, in its own time, of the various kinds of attraction, the various sorts of charm practicable by them—each beautiful in its way, but only perfect when in harmony with age and condition. For instance, the simplicity of a child is silliness in a full-grown girl; the unsuspecting frankness of a girl is loose-lippedness and undignified want of reticence in a woman; the instinctive coquetry and desire to excite admiration and love in a maiden become folly and heartlessness, and a fixed habit of inconstancy is, as time goes on, a ghoulish craving in a matron; and so on through the whole list.

There is a loose way of handling money, without thinking of the purpose it ought to serve, which some people mistake for liberality, but which is nothing but wastefulness. There is also a grasping way of withholding it which is mistaken for frugality, but which is only miserliness. The wise man values money for certain ends which it will serve, and, striving to promote these ends, he is too intelligent to be either miserly or wasteful. He systematizes his means, whatever they may be, and by wasting nothing in unprofitable ways he can afford to be liberal, while in being wisely liberal in the right direction, he is most truly frugal.

Amusement in itself is a real need, which always makes itself felt, and in some way or other is sure to get supplied. It is not, as some suppose, a sort of superfluous luxury which should be patiently waited for till all other desirable advantages are secured; it is rather a deep-seated necessity, which in all circumstances must and will be satisfied, if not from fountains pure and sweet, then from sources unwholesome and corrupt. The young need it more than the old, the busy more than the idle, the poor more than the rich; but all need it, and all in some form obtain it.

We cannot be young twice; we cannot turn upon our steps and go back to gather the garlands we gathered ten years ago. And, therefore, with a gaze over on the cross upon the distant hills, and a remembrance always of the shadow-land that lies beyond, let us endeavor to be contented with small things, and to make ourselves happy in the pleasantness of simple pleasures.

The World's Happenings.

The site of the city of Boston was sold in 1633 for $150.

Up in Vermont $17,000 skating rinks are offered for $300.

Hartford has a 13-year old girl who tips the beam at 295 pounds.

Cows in Key West are labeled with the names of persons for whom their milk is exclusively kept.

A Dakota farmer claims to have raised seventeen bushels of wheat in three years from one grain of seed.

The "London Home for Lost Dogs" gives shelter to fifty thousand homeless and starving canines annually.

A single street car company in New Orleans shot $10,000 worth of mules the other day on account of glanders.

The workmen at the St. Louis glass-works have carried their point, after a strike of fourteen months' duration.

It is estimated, taking the report of 1880 as a basis, that there are now 100,000 practicing physicians in the United States.

An English clergyman advertises in a church paper his willingness to exchange a cassock, nearly new, for a bull-pup with a good pedigree.

As the result of arboriculture, birds are making their appearance in Dakota that were never seen there before. Quail, in particular, are abundant.

The postmaster at Millersburg, Mo., set a bear trap in his office and caught a man who now lies in jail at Fulton, Mo., for robbing the store and post-office.

In one of the great London hospitals the practice has been introduced of using the spare ambulances to give rides to the children and the convalescents.

A couple ran away from Hollister, Cal., lately, and, together with a clergyman, rowed three miles out to sea, where the marriage ceremony was performed.

French flats are going out of fashion in New York, and the demand for small houses far exceeds the supply. Americans, it has been discovered, want living room.

An American actor now in Germany advertises that he has with great difficulty secured leave of absence from President Cleveland to play in Austria for one month.

A Byfield, Mass., farmer bought a large quantity of campaign torches last fall, and has stuck them up about his garden, keeping them lighted at night to kill the frost.

A great many coins—English shillings, sixpence, coppers, and one Canadian piece—were found in Jumbo's stomach by the gentlemen having charge of his remains.

The "Yankee" accent and inflection are coming into fashion in aristocratic English circles, and the innovation—in reality the revival—seems to have proved fascinating.

Mainsprings of watches break most frequently in the fall of the year, and watchmakers are said to put in more new springs in two fall months than in all the rest of the year.

All tips received by waiters, porters, bell-boys, etc., in the largest Chicago hotels are now turned over to the book-keeper of the establishment, it is said, as part of the regular revenues.

A milk dealer's defence in a suit now going on in Brooklyn is that milk shipped by him had been stolen by railroad employes and adulterated stuff substituted. This, he asserts, is often done.

A swarm of bees took possession of a church near Elkton, Md., on a recent Sabbath, and made their presence so well known that the congregation deemed it advisable to suspend services for the day.

Att'y General Garland's summer home, "Hominy Hill," is a sequestered nook in the dense forest near the banks of the Arkansas River. The house is a log cabin containing only one room and scarcely any furniture.

A colored resident of Athens, Ga., who is now serving out a sentence in the chain gang there, is so well pleased with the life that he promises when released to commit an offence in order to again be sent to the gang.

A new industry in the Southern forests is the utilization of the needles of the long-leaved pine. The leaves are soaked in a bath to remove the glazing, and then "curled" for stuffing cushions or other upholstering purposes.

A step towards abolishing the "big hat nuisance" at the theatre has just been taken by the management of a Vienna play house, which orders that all female patronizers must either wear low headgear or forego the pleasure of attendance at the performances.

A club at Yorkville, N. Y., has built a kite 18 1-2 feet high and 14 feet wide, of red, white and blue cloth, mounted on cross-sticks 1 1-4 inches square, with a centre-stick of 1 1-2 inch stuff. The tail is of rags and 600 feet long, and the cord, 1,000 feet long, is as big as a clothes-line.

A novel method of advertising has been developed on the North Italy Railway. It consists of providing the tickets with pockets and inserting in each pocket a little roll of paper printed with advertisements. When all the spaces are let, the company makes about $160 on every 10,000 tickets.

There is an abundance of room yet in this world. The 1,400,000,000 persons supposed to be on the globe could all find easy standing room within the limits of a field ten miles square, and, by the aid of a telephone could be addressed at one time by a single speaker. In a field twenty miles square they could all be comfortably seated.

Dr. Hoyt, of New York, had just stepped into a pharmacy the other afternoon, when a man rushed in to invoke aid for a woman burning to death in the streets. The doctor hurried to the spot and found the sufferer, naked, scorched and dying, to be his own young wife, whom he had left safe at their rooms only a few minutes before.

THE BIRDS MUST KNOW.

BY H. H. J.

The birds must know. Who wisely sings
Will sing as they.
The common air has generous wings;
So songs make their way.

No messenger to run before,
Devising plan,
No mention of place or hour,
To any man;
No waiting till some sound betrays
A listening ear:
No different voice—no new delays
If steps draw near.

"What bird is that? The song is good."
And eager eyes
Go peering through the dusky wood
In glad surprise.

Then, late at night, when by his fire
The traveler sits,
Watching the flame go brighter, higher,
The sweet song flits
By snatches through his weary brain
To help him rest.
When next he goes that road again
An empty nest
On leafless bough will make him sigh:
"Ah me! last spring,
Just here I heard, in passing by,
That rare bird sing."

But while he sighs, remembering
How sweet the song,
The little bird, on tireless wing,
Is borne along
To other air; and other men,
With weary feet,
On other roads, the simple strain
Are finding sweet.

The birds must know. Who wisely sings
Will sing as they;
The common air has generous wings;
Songs make their way.

Of Paly Gold.

BY JULIA A. GODDARD.

"GOING out again, Horace?" queried the Lady Mary, taking off her spectacles and shaking the little gray curls and towering headdress she persisted in wearing in spite of fashion. "Dear me, how restless you young men are! Will you never learn to stay indoors as I do?"

"You told me yesterday, Aunt Molly, that I was growing too studious, and injuring my health," Mr. Tremont reminded her, with mock gravity.

"Ha!" said the old lady, you remember too well! Besides, I was not thinking of your health, but of"—she meant to have added, "how dull the house seems to me without!" though she altered it to a more snappish remark—"I was thinking of your mare. You'll work her off her legs."

The young man, who was pulling on his riding-gloves, laughed good-humoredly.

"If Brown Bessie can't go ten or twelve miles a-day, I'll sell her. Restless did you call me? Have I not dutifully pinned myself to your apron all the morning, and unravelled your weekly bills, which, by the way, you might just as well turn over to the housekeeper?"

"No, Horace," Lady Mary Tremont interrupted, drawing up her small figure with great dignity, "I have too deep a sense of my duties—I wish you had the same!—and I'll be my own steward, and keep my own accounts, as long as I have strength to do so!"

"And give yourself headaches innumerable, and get fogged in arithmetical mists, such as I found you in this morning! *Cui bono?* But wilful woman will have her way—eh, Aunt Molly?"

"Hold your tongue sir, and be more respectful!" she retorted. "Never mind my failings, but tell me where you are going? Into the village? But I don't know why I ask; you never bring home any news, go where you will."

"What do you call news—the bits of gossip your maid contrives to regale you with,"

"I never listened to gossip, sir; but of course I like to hear how my neighbors are progressing, who is born, married, or buried; and this reminds me that your old schoolfriend, Sir James Neath has just married one of Lord Gravely's daughters. When are you going to follow his example, gladden my heart, and give your friends cause to congratulate you!"

"My dear aunt, I thought we agreed to leave this vexed question alone!" and handsome Horace Tremont knitted his brows a little. "If I am contended to remain as I am for a few years longer, why urge me to alter my condition? You would not like a rival in my affections, I'm sure, for you know you are frightfully jealous," he added demurely; "and for my own part, I am your very humble servant, and why should I transfer my allegiance to any other she?"

"Because you are my heir!" Lady Mary persisted; "that is, you will be, if you behave yourself."

Again the young man's brows contracted. Such remarks as these sounded like threats, and often goaded him into acts of rebellion. The old lady loved power as much as she loved him, and forgot that she wounded his self-respect when she had held over him in terrorem her ability to disinherit him if he offended her.

"I fail to see what your ladyship's intentions have to do with my marriage," he said, coldly. "Am I to make it publicly known that the bride of my choice must not depend upon my being able to keep her, as my wealth or poverty will result on my ability to "behave myself?"

"Now, Horace, don't lose your temper!" said Lady Mary, with a reproving gesture. "Dear me how passionate you are! It's very ill-bred to make sarcastic remarks to me, because you know that I should disdain to retaliate upon you. The fact is this, I want to see you married—well married, remember!—before I am laid in my grave. No, don't interrupt me with platitudes—I hate platitudes! nor sentiment—that's worse but carry out my wishes as you ought to do."

"I thought that in so very important a subject as matrimony a man was allowed to make his own wishes the first consideration?" Mr. Tremont observed.

"Nonsense!" cried Lady Mary, sharply—"I mean yes, to be sure he is; but then you must—that is, you ought to view the affair with my eyes! Indeed, you cannot do otherwise! You know as well as I do, that, as master of Tremont, you'll be one of the first landholders in the country; and your wife must be as well born as yourself, and able to keep up the family dignity as I have done. No one can say that Mary Tremont has dragged her name in the dirt, thank goodness!"

"I'll make a note of it, Aunt Molly; and when some perfect and noble demoiselle turns up we'll discuss the subject again. Now wish me good-bye and a pleasant ride."

But Lady Mary patted the floor impatiently with her high-heeled shoe:

"This is the way you always put one off, and I don't like it Horace. I do not like it, sir; I have had a lonely life in this old house, for my relatives and I—no matter whose fault it was, theirs or mine—could never agree; a very lonely house till your dying father sent you to me from India, and besought me to be a mother to you. I've tried to do his bidding, Horace."

The young man stopped and kissed the wrinkled hand that had clutched his sleeve.

"You have been the best, the kindest, the most generous of friends to me!" he exclaimed.

"Well, well, I have loved you dearly; and now I ask my adopted son to give me a daughter who will cheer and comfort my declining years. Is this asking too much?"

Horace kissed her hand again, but he did not say the words she evidently wanted to hear.

Lady Mary at this moment was tender and indulgent; but then, her moods were as varying as the weather.

Maidens of birth and fortune are apt to be as tenacious of their rights as she was, and might not be disposed to yield obedience to an eccentric spinster who could be very tyrannical if opposed.

So he temporized.

"I'll think over what you have been saying, ma'am; but just now my attention has been distracted by the capers of Brown Bess, who has grown impatient, and is pawing up your gravel shamefully. Have you any commissions for me?"

"No—yes! Someone must scold Barnes, the butcher, for sending us such coarse meat last week!"

"I am not going into the village," said Horace, hastily.

"Then can't you ride round by the Upper Farm? Trotter tells me that Mrs. Rennie has taken lodgers—yes, actually taken lodgers!—though she refused to let me rent a couple of her rooms for that companion of mine, Miss Moss, when I was obliged to get rid of her because she quarrelled so with everyone in the house—disagreeable creature! Now, I consider it very disrespectful of the Rennies to let their apartments after declining the tenant I offered them."

"Such an agreeable tenant, too, as Miss Moss, eh, Aunt Molly?"

But her ladyship would not hear the sauey query.

"Such people as the Rennies ought to be more obliging," she went on to say. "In olden times the vassals of the Tremonts dare not have refused a behest of their liege lady!"

"My poor aunt! how mortifying for you that you were not born four or five hundred years ago! It's hard to be denied the satisfaction of clapping buxom Mrs. Rennie into a dungeon, and cutting her stalwart sons into mincemeat, isn't it?"

Horace ran away before the half-angry, half-amused old lady could retort upon him.

But ere he had ridden a dozen yards from the door he was recalled by the shrill voice of Mrs. Trotter, her ladyship's personal attendant:

"Oh! if you please, Mr. Tremont, sir, my lady hopes you'll not forget to inquire who them strangers are at the Upper Farm. And if you should go past the churchyard I'd be most exceedingly obliged to you, sir, for bringing me half-a-dozen sprigs off the rosemary-bush that grows in the south corner. My lady wants some herb tea made, and it's her fancy to have that."

"Thanks for your commission, Trotter," said Horace to himself as he nodded and rode away. "It's a weird fancy of my lady's, but it gives me an excuse for forgetting the other. Hang Mrs. Rennie's lodgers! She has a right to let every room in her house if she likes, and I commend her for independence in positively refusing to be pestered with such a mischief-making old maid as Maria Moss."

So Mr. Tremont turned his horse's head in quite another direction, and contrived to ignore for awhile all the perplexities and annoyances to which Lady Mary's peculiar temper subjected him, till the sinking of the sun in the west warned him that he had only an hour left for gallop home and dressing for dinner.

But he took the route that led him near the church, which, like many such rustic edifices, stood on the summit of a hill, nearly a mile from the village street.

Tying his horse to the gate, he vaulted over it, and stepping carefully among the lowly graves, found the fragrant herb he sought, and then forgot his haste in the enjoyment of the exquisite landscape the spot commanded.

He watched the sun sink below the horizon, and the gray veil of twilight begin to descend upon the earth, till the increasing shadows warned him to depart.

In the sober mood the peaceful scene had engendered he strolled slowly back to the gate, lingering more than once beside some stately monument erected to his ancestors; and as he passed the church itself, he glanced upward at the window through which he could catch a glimpse of the marble tablet on which the names and death in a foreign land of his own parents were recorded.

But as he looked his heart stood still, for through the lattice-panes of the window a female face was gazing down upon him—a pale face, with dreamy eyes and low, smooth brows, over which rippled hair of the palest gold.

It was such a face as he had seen in those pictures of angels Fra Angelico had loved to paint; and viewed by the gray light of the coming evening, it was surely too pale, too pure, to be of earthly mould!

He retreated a step or two, and then the dreamy eyes lit up, the softly-chiselled lips began to move, and he awoke from his dream of rapture and astonishment.

It was a living, breathing woman at whom he was gazing, and a pair of slender hands were held up as if supplicating his assistance.

It was eagerly rendered.

This fair creature was evidently a stranger who had contrived to get locked in the church, and availing himself of his greater knowledge of the building, Horace hurried to a door under the belfry, generally left unfastened for the convenience of the ringers.

Up the worn steps he ran till he reached the organ-gallery; it was so low that to an agile man like himself, it was not difficult to climb over the front, and this done, he slid down one of the supports, reaching the floor below in safety.

As he brushed off the dust his coat had gathered he looked around, and saw that the young lady he came to succor had leaped down from the window to which she had raised herself with the help of some hassocks, and was attentively regarding him. Perhaps she felt half afraid of the impetuous young man who had answered her signs so readily, but her fears vanished when he came towards her.

He was a gentleman in the truest sense of the word, and she was soon frankly explaining what had brought her into such an awkward position.

Her name, she said, with a slightly foreign intonation, was Lettice Duvalle, and she was staying at the Upper Farm with her aunt, who was in delicate health.

She was fond of sketching, and having, during one of her rambles, described the old woman who swept the church tottering towards it, she had followed and obtained permission to enter and take a sketch of a curious old monument in a chantry adjoining the chancel.

"The poor old dame," she added, "must have forgotten me, or fancied that I had gone away; for when I finished my drawing, and went in search of her, she had vanished, the doors were locked, and I have struggled in vain with the rusty hasps and latches of these windows.

"I was trying to resign myself to the prospect of spending the night here, when I heard the neighing of your horse."

Horace Tremont began to express his pleasure at being able to be of service to her, but he was rather impatiently interrupted.

"You are very kind, monsieur, very polite: but I cannot quit the church as you have entered it. What, then, shall I do? I must still remain here, unless you will have the great goodness to ride to the cottage of the old woman, and bid her come to release me?"

"That'll be a tedious process," he replied. "Let me try whether I can unfasten one of these casements.

"It would be useless," she told him with a sigh. "The distance to the ground would be too great. I should not have the courage for the leap."

Still Horace persisted.

With some trouble he opened the window, and dropped from it; then bringing his horse beneath it, vaulted into his saddle, and held out his hand to Miss Duvalle, who had once more climbed into the deep window-seat, and was watching his movements.

"One step," he said smilingly, "and you are free! Do not be afraid; Brown Bessie shall not stir, and my arm shall steady you. Put your foot on the mare's neck and trust to me."

Lettice Duvalle hesitated; but a glance over her shoulder at the gloomy church, and the thought of being left there for another hour in the darkness, spurred her into compliance.

With a rosy blush, lending new beauty to the face Horace already thought so charming, she slid her fingers into his.

The next moment she found herself seated in his saddle, where he held her firmly but gently with one hand, while with the other he curbed Brown Bess, whom this unlooked for addition to her burden had startled.

He would have liked to hold her there while he perused her delicate lineaments; but an imperious "Release me, sir!" compelled him to relax his hold; and lightly as a bird she sprang down, and with a few words of thanks hurried away.

But Horace also dismounted and walked by her side, respectfully insisting that it was too late for her to be out alone, till they reached the gate at the Upper Farm, and he had no longer a pretext for remaining.

She told him all concerning herself that she thought it necessary to impart to a stranger; but he contrived to slight that she was, as he had surmised, of foreign extraction, her father having been a French artist.

After his death her mother had married again, and migrated to Canada, leaving Lettice to the care of an aunt, who was a fanciful invalid, and had come to England to consult a physician, who prescribed quiet and country air as the best remedies for the imaginary ailments of which she complained.

"Then your stay in the neighborhood is uncertain?" Horace remarked, and the color that mantled in Lettice's cheeks as she faintly replied that she did not know was a flush of mingled pain and shame. She could not tell him that Madame Duvalle, having no objection to marry again, and finding the modest man to whom she was recommended a hale, well-to-do middle-aged widower, was laying siege to his affections, and would not quit her present quarters while there was a prospect of victory.

Horace left his new friend with reluctance and galloped to the Hall.

In sullen silence Lady Mary heard his apologies for not appearing at her dinner-table till after the second course had been removed; she would not evince any interest in the adventure at the church, although Horace described it most amusingly, nor vouchsafe any reply to his hope that she would call upon the invalid.

She had been constrained to eat her fish in solitary state, and carve for herself, a task she detested, and she punished her nephew by refusing to be conciliated.

However she drove to the Upper Farm the following day, and came back to declaim at the folly and vanity of the silly, middle-aged Frenchwoman, who had played off so many airs and graces on her visitor.

"She is fifty years of age, Horace, and is as sallow and plain as her countrywomen generally are; yet she ogles, and smirks, and throws herself into attitudes like a young girl! She could walk about and exert herself as well as I can if she chose; instead of which she lies on a couch shaded by a rose-colored screen, with her face painted—yes, I am sure she rouges—and her dress a marvel of elegance, from the little lace cap to the embroidered slippers. Why Mrs. Rennie says she spends between two and three hours at her toilette every morning! and yet she casts up her eyes and lays her hand on her heart, and talks to you plaintively of her sufferings! Bah! it was sickening; I'll not go near her again."

"Then you did not see Madame Duvalle's young relative?" queried Horace.

"Yes I did, and found her charming, fresh, naive, piquante—to use her own language—ashamed of her aunt's absurdities, yet tender and dutiful. I longed to shake the aunt and kiss the niece. By the way, I must do something for little Lettice; she is just the kind of girl that would give one credit. She is coming here to teach me some new stitches in lacey work—she excels in it herself—and I like her so well on further acquaintance I shall try whether I cannot rescue her from the bad example of that ridiculous woman who makes a slave of her with her caprices."

On the morrow Lady Mary condescended to inform her nephew that he might consider himself off duty for the whole day. Lettice Duvalle was coming to the Hall, and would bear her company during his absence.

But Horace did not choose to avail himself of this permission; he preferred to lounge about the drawing room, listening to the sweet voice of my lady's visitor, watching her patiently guide the hostess's fingers in the intricacies of her embroidery or talk to the amused old lady of Paris, or give flattering attention to her ladyship's reminiscences of her youth.

And when Lettice wandered into the garden while her hostess slept, Horace found his way there too; nor left her side till she was recalled to the house to fulfil her promise of singing some of the old ballads that are never sweeter than when trilled by a low, plaintive voice in the twilight.

"You'll come again, my dear?" said Lady Mary; and "You'll come again?" murmured Horace, so beseechingly that the young girl's eyes sank to the ground as she heard it.

Lady Mary made no secret of her contempt for Madame Duvalle, who retaliated by speaking of her as "that ferocious old woman," and mimicking her stately gestures and brusque speeches. Indeed, madame would have forbidden Lettice to accept the frequent invitations sent to her from the Hall, where her own presence was barely tolerated; but she was shrewd and worldly enough to veil her annoyance where her interests were concerned.

Dr. Collis had not been induced to propose, but he had hinted, that when he married, the lady of his choice must be like himself, absolutely without incumbrance. By this he must mean Lettice; and as madame did not care to tell him that the money she was spending so freely was really her niece's—the remains of the small property bequeathed to her by her father—it was awkward.

Conscience would not let her thrust away the young girl to whom she owed her subsistence, but it would relieve her from her dilemma if Lady Mary Tremont offered Lettice a home.

So the young girl was permitted to go to the Hall whenever it did not interfere with her aunt's claims on her time, and

finding there more congenial society than Madame Duvalle's, Lettice would bound off delightfully.

How dearly she loved the broad terrace on which Lady Mary—hale and upright in spite of her years—would pace to and fro, leaning on her arm!

How much she found to admire in the noble suites of apartments through which she was permitted to roam at will!

Yet one day Horace, coming into one of the drawing-rooms suddenly, found Lettice there—not as usual, copying one of her favorite landscapes, or assiduously laboring to overcome the difficulties some artist had conquered, but standing in listless attitude in the oriel window, with large tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Lettice—Miss Duvalle—what has happened to make you unhappy?" he cried, anxiously.

She dashed the tell-tale drops away, and evaded the question.

She had been thinking, that was all—thinking of Paris! England was a fine country, and she had made many and dear friends in the land where her childhood was spent.

"And you are eager to leave us!" he exclaimed, reproachfully.

"I am not going yet," she answered, speaking quickly and with averted head. "Lady Mary has been asking me to come to the Hall for a week or two."

"And you consent?" was the joyful cry.

"If my aunt permits, yes," said Lettice, with no responsive pleasure in her looks and tones. "Lady Mary will be glad of my assistance in preparing a suite of rooms for an expected guest—the Lady Julia Cartley. Why should I refuse?"

It was Horace's turn to redden.

He knew full well that the Earl of Devrin's daughter was the noble damsel his aunt had selected for him, and that ere the close of her visit he would be expected to offer her his hand.

But he had looked on the face of Lettice Duvalle, and his heart was no longer his own.

Her image had stolen into it, and he would wed her or none.

"You will be here a week and I shall not be with you," he said, taking the girl's unresisting hand.

She started, and regarded him wistfully.

"You are going away, and why? Ah! you will meet the young lady at her father's house—you will see it her here—and—and—Heaven bless you, Mr. Tremont, you have my prayers for your happiness!"

But as her faltering voice died away she felt herself drawn towards him.

"I want more, Lettice—I want your love in return for mine," he ardently responded. "If I go hence it will be to accept, not to meet, Lady Julia. Have not my eyes told you how very dear you are to me? Ah! yes, they have; you cannot deny it. Then let my lips repeat the sweet story till they win from you an answering confession."

For a few happy moments Lettice permitted his embrace, but suddenly she released herself and drew back, feeling guilty and oppressed.

Only that morning Lady Mary had confided to her the ambitions she was fostering for her heir's future; how, then, dare she, a mere nobody, accept the bliss that was offered her!

"Alas! we are mad!" she cried, piteously.

"I must not forget what I am, nor let you disappoint the hopes of your friends. Your good aunt—what should she say if she knew our folly!"

"Is it folly, Lettice? Is it madness to love one another dearly and truly? You cannot answer me, you cannot say it is!" And a kiss was stolen from her downcast face. "As for my aunt, what can she urge that would alter my determination? I have always been careful to make her understand that in my choice of a wife I will not be controlled. She may disinherit me if I oppose her; but would you break faith with me because I am poor?"

Lettice's answering look was sufficient reply.

"No, I see you would not, my unselfish darling. But I do not think we need fear any opposition from Aunt Molly, or not more than I can persuade her to set aside. She is very fond of you, Lettice, and I shall remind her how often she has bidden me bring her a daughter who will cheer and comfort her declining years. Lady Julia Cartley is a fashionable young lady who hunts, and shoots, and talks slang. I shall obey my aunt in marrying you, Lettice—you and I shall soon make her think so!"

But Horace reckoned without his host.

When he boldly told Lady Mary on whom his choice had fallen, she sat for a time stupified with amazement.

Her adopted son, the heir of the Tremonts, coolly telling her that he meant to throw himself away on the niece of a hideously-affected, impertinent Frenchwoman.

She forgot how sweet and good Lettice was; but she recollected how she had learned, through Trotter, that Madame Duvalle had kept a large party in roars of laughter with imitations of her peculiarities.

When she recovered power to speak, her wrath was tremendous; yet after the first scathing words she hurled at Horace, she had strength of mind to restrain herself and recognize the danger of provoking him. He was no longer a boy whom she could overawe.

He stood before her with all the passionate pride and firmness that characterized their race gleaming in his dark eyes; and Lady Mary was afraid to drive him to extremities.

She had kept the power in her own hands.

Her will was yet unmade; if she chose she could leave Tremont Hall to a distant relative.

But she prided herself on being a just woman.

She had brought Horace up to expect that he would inherit her wealth, and for her own sake as well as the young man's he must be reasoned with and persuaded to return to his duty.

"We will not quarrel," she said; "we will defer all discussion of this subject till after Lady Julia's visit."

"As you please, Aunt Molly; only remember that I have asked Lettice Duvalle to marry me, and the whole world must know we are betrothed!"

"If you have a spark of gratitude in you," gasped the exasperated lady, all her forbearance at an end, "you will not marry without my consent, and that you shall never have if you persist in marrying beneath you."

"I have asked Lettice Duvalle to be my wife," he said again. "I may have acted too hastily in doing so without first consulting you. I acknowledge and regret this; but I will not behave dishonorably to the best and sweetest girl I ever know."

"Did you tell her that if she marries you she will marry a beggar?" asked the old lady, significantly.

Horace threw back his head.

"Do you think I deceived her, or that lands and money are more precious to me than the love of Lettice? She will wait for me, and if the Hall is to be my home no longer, why there are other countries in which we can dwell, and where I shall reflect no discredit on the name of Tremont by working for my wife and children."

Lady Mary was choking with passion, but she waved him away and he left her.

As soon as she was alone she rang the bell and ordered her carriage.

She dared not goad the high-spirited Horace with her taunts, but they must be aimed at someone, and she drove to the Farm to launch her bolts at the crafty French schemer, as she now styled Madame Duvalle and her equally deceitful niece.

She would not take any blame to herself for having thrown the young people together.

She preferred to think that Lettice and her aunt had been deliberately plotting to win the hand of her heir; and all the while she was on her way to the Farm she brooded over her ire till it had risen to fever heat.

What she said to the objects of her wrath only they themselves could have told, but when she drove away again she left Madame Duvalle in strong hysterics.

Mrs. Rennie, hurrying to her lodger's assistance, found Lettice standing in the hall, her hands clenched—her dilated eyes fixed on the receding carriage—and her face so pallid and stony, that the good woman, who was very fond of pretty Lettice, put her arms about her, and besought her to speak.

But when the rigid lips did unclose, it was to utter words that were afterwards recalled with a shudder.

"She is a bad, cold-hearted woman, and I will never forgive her, never! She will be made to rue this day's work; she shall—she shall!"

That night the servants at the Hall went about whispering to each other, and predicting that my lady would have to choose another heir; for she was one who, when seriously angered, rarely forgave.

She had struck aside the hand Mr. Horace offered her to assist in alighting, and he had packed his valise and spoken of departing on the morrow.

Once sundered, would they ever meet again?

But when the morning dawned, and Trotter went as usual to her mistress's chamber door, it stood ajar and the bed was empty.

Lady Mary lay on the floor in her dressing-room senseless, nay, apparently dying.

The casket in which she kept her jewels had been rifled, and the half-open window showed how the thief had escaped.

Who could have done this?

Alas! when they raised her they found clenched and tangled in her fingers a tress of woman's hair—a tress of pale gold!

No one in or near the Hall possessed such hair save Lettice Duvalle, and even while Horace was gazing incredulously at this strange piece of evidence someone whispered that Lettice had disappeared.

She had not been seen since she breathed those threats in the hearing of Mrs. Rennie from whom she had turned abruptly to shut herself in her own room.

* * * * * *

Many a time and oft in the weary days that followed the discovery, did Horace Tremont wish that he could die or forget.

Lady Mary still lay insensible to all that passed around her, and the efforts of the surgeon to arouse her were only partially successful.

There was no doubt that the thief, surprised by her while plundering her jewel-casket, had silenced her cries for help by striking her with a New Zealand club that stood in the corner of the room, and that paralysis of the brain had followed the blow.

Eminent surgeons came down from London to hold consultations over her—to shake their heads doubtfully, and express a fear that she would never recover consciousness, but gradually sink into the grave.

And having done all they could—which amounted to nothing at all—they pocketed their fees and returned to town, leaving their patient to the care of her adopted son and her servants.

Once Horace's efforts to rouse her seemed to penetrate to her dulled senses, and she struggled with the lethargy in which she lay.

But when she opened her eyes and began to speak, she mingled such frantic entreaties in the name of Lettice Duvalle, that her shuddering bearer rushed from the room, unable to endure the torture she was inflicting upon him.

Yet he would not believe that it was his betrothed—his sweet, loving, womanly Lettice—who had committed the foul deed of which Lady Mary was the victim.

No one else spared her; even good Mrs. Rennie who had loved her dearly, recalled the threats she had uttered, and acknowledged that appearances were sadly against her.

Lettice must have premeditated her flight for she carried with her all the most valuable articles she possessed and stolen away in the darkness as a guilty creature would do.

Although Lady Mary's pride and *bonne-querie* had often kept her neighbors aloof, they remembered now only her many excellent qualities; and Horace was besieged with visits of condolence and offers to assist him in tracing the wretched girl who had so cruelly wronged her benefactress.

There was a wide spread murmur of disgust when it became known that Mr. Tremont positively declined to set on foot a search for Lettice Duvalle.

It was useless telling his advisers that his aching heart still refused to condemn her; he would have been reminded of the tress, torn from her golden hair found in Lady Mary's fingers, and how could he have answered them?

Some, and these were young and romantic, pitied him for the infatuation that could still place any faith in a beautiful adventuress; others, and these were Lady Mary's old friends, sternly reprobated such weakness; and avoiding Horace, privately wrote to the next of kin, advising him to come to the Hall, take up his abode there, and make those efforts to bring home the crime to Lettice Duvalle which Lady Mary's adopted son neglected.

Madame Duvalle quitted the Upper Farm a few days after Lettice's disappearance.

Dr. Collis was a prudent man, who did not choose to injure himself in the eyes of his patient by continuing his acquaintance with a person so closely connected with the universally condemned Lettice; and when madame sent for him, on pretence of indisposition, he politely recommended her to place herself under the care of another practitioner.

Railing against him as a deceiver, and against her niece as the cause of the distrustful looks she encountered on every side, the disappointed Frenchwoman departed in haste.

The police took the trouble to establish a species of espionage on her movements, for they suspected that her rage was simulated, and that she would join her niece as soon as she could do so safely, and share with her the booty she had carried off.

But they were mistaken.

Madame had washed her hands clear of the girl who had brought disgrace upon her and returned to Paris, where she had plenty of gossiping acquaintances who would gladly receive her, and listen to hear tales of those "barbarous English!"

The heir-at-law established himself at the Hall, and Horace endured his presence with apparent indifference, though every nerve in his body quivered with agony when he saw him questioning the servants or holding conferences with the detective whom he had sent for and provided with lodgings in the village.

Would they succeed in discovering where Lettice had hid herself and dragging her from her refuge and denouncing her? Lady Mary still lay in the same stupor that was so like death, and if she never recovered her senses, who else would lift the burden off Horace Tremont's soul, and assure him that his betrothed was innocent!

The young man began to look so haggard and miserable that even those who blamed him were unable to withhold their compassion.

He spoke to no one if he could help it, refused the companionship of the heir-at-law, and when not wandering in the most solitary recesses of the park, would stand at the foot of Lady Mary's bed, gazing sadly at the motionless form stretched upon it, and heaving such deep sighs that Trotter, his aunt's faithful attendant, would weep for sympathy.

The fatigue of such continual watching having proved too much for Lady Mary's servants, a couple of nursing-sisters from a society near London had been sent for to share it, and one of these would glide into Horace's place as soon as he had quitted it.

It was she who was indefatigable in carrying out the suggestions of the doctors, who chafed the nerveless hands of her patient, and patiently fed her drop by drop with the nutritious liquids which were all that could be forced between the pale lips. The other sister was stout and inactive, but this one never seemed to weary—never willingly quitted the bedside at her charge, and only grew impatient when anyone whispered in her hearing that there was no hope.

Horace Tremont had scarcely seen the face of this woman, for her conventual hood and cap overshadowed it; he only knew that it was swarthy as an Oriental's, and that the smooth bands of hair across her forehead were intensely black; but her presence exercised a mesmeric influence upon him.

Though she never approached him but always moved away from the bed as he drew near, he always had a consciousness that she was at hand—that she was hovering in the background, gazing from beneath that shrouding hood at him.

He began, in his turn, to furtively watch her, to speculate whether she, with her noiseless movements and silent but untiring zeal, could be a spy of the detectives' in reduced into the house to further their plans to find and capture Lettice.

But he described the fancy as an unworthy one after he came upon her kneeling by Lady Mary's couch absorbed in prayer; for when she had, as usual, vanished as soon as she heard his footstep, he found a tear on the poor thin hand against which her cheek had been lying.

A new idea had taken possession of him, one that made him tremble even while his heart leaped with gladness; but he dared not take any steps to ascertain whether his conjecture was the true one, for he and the dark-visaged sister were never left alone. He grew feverish and restless, afraid to stay in Lady Mary's chamber, lest he should forget the caution he had imposed upon himself; afraid to quit the house, lest something terrible should occur while he was absent.

But one evening Lady Mary moaned and writhed, and cried for mercy as she had done once before; and then twining her arms about the sufferer's neck, the sister soothed her with loving caresses and tender words till the paroxysm passed away.

When this was so, Horace, who had been standing by clasped the devoted nurse to his throbbing breast.

"My Lettice, my darling, you have betrayed yourself! You must go hence, ere anyone denounces you!"

"I am not afraid," she answered, calmly. "I am not afraid, for I have done no wrong."

He kissed her passionately; he could do so without a pang, for, thank Heaven! his faith had never faltered.

"You should not have hidden yourself from me, my Lettice. I have never doubted your innocence!"

"I went away," she answered, "because your aunt refused to forgive you unless I did; unless I gave you time to overcome what she called your foolish fancy for the penniless, low born girl you had learned to love. And I went so hurriedly because my aunt had made herself hateful to me she counselled deceit and treachery; she would have had me induce you to wed me secretly, and in her ire at my indignant refusal, she said such bitter, such cruel things, that I said I would never forgive her—never!"

"But whither went you, my dearest?"

"To a humble friend, a *blanchisseuse*, in Soho who sheltered me willingly. It was through her I learned what had happened to your aunt. I remembered no longer her harshness, but how kind she had been to me in earlier days; and when I heard that nurses were required, I risked all to come here. I knew that no one would tend her more lovingly than I should."

And Lettice disengaged herself from Horace's embrace to lean over the bed and press her lips to Lady Mary's forehead.

"Sometimes I think she recognizes me," the girl murmured; "sometimes I think she hears my prayers for her recovery. But if they are not to be granted, she will know in heaven how my gratitude brought me back to her when she needed me."

Horace did not reply, for a hand was on his arm that held him in a grip of iron.

It was the detective who had stolen into the room.

Trotter had heard the voice of Lettice, and flown downstairs to spread her discovery, and entreat everyone to come and hinder this dreadful girl from murdering her mistress a second time.

Lettice saw at a glance what had happened; the suppressed triumph of the detective, the wild agony depicted on the face of Horace, and bravely conquering her own anguish, she spoke calmly to both.

"There must be no scene here. I will go downstairs with you; you can do with me what you will."

But as she moved towards the door a voice from the bed arrested her steps.

"Lettice!" it said, feebly. "Do not leave me, Lettice. I cannot spare you!"

And Lady Mary extended her hand, and drew the young girl back to her side.

The detective went away on tiptoe, carrying with him Trotter, who had fainted, leaving Horace Tremont and his betrothed to attend to the lady, and with their assiduous cares to keep alive her returning sense.

She recognized her adopted son, and smiled upon him affectionately ere she sank into a calm sleep, from which she awoke, still weak and helpless, still clinging to Lettice, and looking uneasy if she were out of sight, but in her right mind once more.

As soon as she was capable of conversing Horace entreated her to state what she knew of the robbery and attack upon herself.

"Have you not caught the good-for-nothing fellow?" she asked, with some of her old eagerness. "Not recovered my pearls? Don't you know that it was Jodrell, the footman I turned away for stealing some silver spoons, whom I found in my dressing-room rifling my jewel-box? I thought I had punished him sufficiently for that first robbery when I dismissed him with a rebuke and no character; but instead of being grateful for my lenity, and living a better life, he made use of his knowledge of the house to enter it by stealth, rob me, and when I would have seized him, strike me brutally till I suppose I became insensible."

"But, dear Aunt Molly, how came you in your dressing-room with a tress of hair turned round your fingers that looked like Lettice's?"

Lady Mary was silent for a minute, and

looked from one to the other of the young faces bending over her so anxiously.

"I suppose I may as well make a clean breast of it. I was very unhappy that night, first cross and foolish, then penitent for all the bitter things I had said during the day. I remembered that I was growing old, and could not afford to lose my boy, and Lettice had shamed me with her patient forbearance and readiness to sacrifice herself that the man who loved her might not suffer for it. And these regrets were strengthened when I took from my desk the tress of her hair I had asked her for one day—don't you remember it, child? So I left my chamber, intending to seek you in yours, Horace, and tell you I would consent to let you wed Lettice if you really could not live without her, and I suppose I had unconsciously carried that golden tress with me. What happened afterwards you already know."

Lady Mary was never again her old imperious self; but perhaps she a happier woman, when so thoroughly dependent on those who loved her.

The jewels were recovered and the thief punished, and ere long the pearls, reset in more modern fashion, formed one of Lady Mary's presents to the bride of her adopted son, the golden-haired Lettice, who repays her for overcoming her prejudices by lavishing on her all the affection she can spare from the happy Horace.

A Private Rehearsal.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

GILBERT WARING, student at the London University, reading hard for an M. A. degree sat alone in his dingy bachelor lodging on the second floor in Gower Street, one perfect night in June.

Books strewed the table, overflowing on to the floor, and filled every available chair; but Gilbert was evidently neglecting his studies, for no lamp was lit, and he sat in darkness at the window, gazing across the road so absorbedly that he did not hear the quick, bounding tread up the stairs that led to his room, followed though it was by a loud knock, and then the unceremonious entrance of his bosom friend, Ned Haslam, who exclaimed,—

"Why Gil!—sitting in the dark! What's the matter, man?"

For answer, Gilbert beckoned his friend to the window and pointed to the first floor of the opposite house, through the windows of which could be seen a handsomely furnished room, and, seated at a piano, a young lady, all unconscious of the eyes which were watching her every movement.

"Well, she is a stunner!" was Ned's enthusiastic comment. "Divinely fair! I quite admire your taste, old fellow."

"Hush! she is going to sing," whispered Gilbert.

And through the open windows they could hear every note of the rich, sweet voice, as the slender fingers ran lightly over the piano-keys.

She was so absorbed in her music that she did not see what the watchers across the street saw plainly; the door opened, and a gentleman entered, stood for a minute as if listening to the sweet notes of the singer, then came noiselessly behind her, and leaning over, gently lifted one of her long fair curls in his hand and pressed it to his lips with an appearance of the most tender devotion.

The music ceased abruptly, and the young lady sprang to her feet, apparently not at all pleased with the liberty her admirer had taken.

She evidently reproached him, and by his gestures he seemed to be apologizing.

"Really, this is as good as going to the theatre," remarked Ned. "I wish we could hear what they are saying."

Meanwhile the new-comer talked long and earnestly; but if he was urging his suit, he received no encouragement from the young lady, for she shook her head now and then, and once, when he sought to take her hand, she shrank from him as if he were touch were loathsome to her.

At last he grew desperate, and throwing himself at her feet, seemed to be entreating her to alter her decision.

The young lady was quite overwhelmed at his persistence and dramatic attitude, for she covered her face with her hands, and sobbed violently but she evidently was firm in her denial, and after a brief interval he dashed from the room banging the door behind him.

Presently the door reopened, and a young girl came in and threw her arms about the young lady, dried her eyes, and tried to comfort her with caresses and tender expostulations.

"That little girl suits my taste better than the other one, if you will excuse my saying so," remarked Ned. "I grant she isn't quite as pretty, but there is something about her that takes me."

The young girl persuaded her sister to lie down and rest, and after covering her tightly, and watching to see her eyes close, she left the room again.

"Well, I suppose that is the end of the drama," remarked Ned. "Let's go out for a walk now, for the excitement is all over."

"No," answered Gilbert. "See, the door is opening again!"

"This becomes thrilling!" cried Ned. "The villian reappears with blood in his eye. Now we shall see some fun."

The rejected suitor crept towards the sleeping girl, with a stealthy, cat-like movement, and standing beside the couch, looked down at her, as she lay all unconscious of his presence.

He knelt down, and, lifted his hands toward heaven in an attitude of despair, then the terror-stricken spectators saw the bright gleam of steel.

"He's murdering her!" cried Gilbert. Quick, we may be too late to save her!"

And he darted downstairs closely followed by his friend, and rushed across the street. The door of the opposite house was open, and they sprang upstairs, and dashed open the door of the room in which they had just witnessed the tragedy, to find it full of people, laughing and talking.

This surely was the room in which they had witnessed the cold-blooded assassination of a helpless girl. What did it—could it mean?

A gentleman advanced, with a look of indignation at this unceremonious intrusion.

"What does this mean?" he enquired angrily. "What do you mean by bolting into a man's house this way? Explain yourselves!"

The young men were mute for a moment, too utterly bewildered to speak.

There stood the supposed assassin, looking at them curiously, and beside him was his victim, unharmed, and bearing no marks of the scene through which she had just passed.

"We have made a great mistake, somehow," began Gilbert; "though I cannot understand it at all. We saw this young lady being stabbed by that gentleman beside her, and we rushed over, hoping to be in time to prevent a murder."

The old gentleman burst into a peal of laughter that seemed to be infectious, for all the company joined in it, laughing till the tears streamed down their cheeks with the excess of their emotions.

Only Gilbert and Ned retained their puzzled expression.

They turned to leave the room, feeling as if they were being unjustly ridiculed, when the old gentleman put a detaining hand on them.

"Wait a moment," he exclaimed; "I must explain. My daughters and son are members of an amateur theatrical club, and they were going through a rehearsal of their part before the others should arrive."

The friends joined heartily in the laughter which broke out again.

The old gentleman insisted on their remaining for the evening, and they proved such agreeable company that they received urgent invitations to repeat their visit, which it is unnecessary to say, they gladly accepted.

Not very many months later, cards were issued for a double-wedding; and after the ceremony was over, both bridegrooms declared that they owed their happiness to their brother-in law, "the villain," as they persisted in calling him.

The Invaders.

BY JULIA A. GODDARD.

IT was during the exterminating warfare which characterized the invasion of Spain by the French that a small body of "chasseurs, detached from the main division, had halted for the night at a village called Figueras.

The appearance of this company was to the poor inhabitants a source of disagreeable anticipations, actuated as they were by natural antipathy to the domineering foe, and by anxiety for the little property acquired by the toil of congregated years.

"What, ho!" cried the leader of the soldiery, as he stopped before the gate of the monastery, the only house in the hamlet that appeared capable of rendering any tolerable accommodation, "open your doors, or we shall break them open!"

And as he spoke, he struck the portal with his sword.

There was silence for a time, as though the inmates were deliberating on what course to pursue; and then the figure of an aged man became apparent, as with trembling hands he loosened the fastenings which secured the dwelling.

As the soldiers entered the refectory, the assembled brethern rose from their seats, and calmly viewed the haughty intruders.

"Excuse me, Fathers," exclaimed La Ville, awed into respect by their dignified demeanor, "but my men require repose and good cheer, or else——" And he touched the hilt of his sabre significantly.

"Sir," replied the Abbot, "your wishes must be obeyed, were even our desire to serve you less."

So saying, he motioned them to sit down, and commanded the servitors to load the table with the best the monastery could afford.

The Abbot left the apartment for a brief interval, and speedily returned, followed by two attendants bearing luxurious silver vessels filled with luscious and delicious wine.

"Now, tell me candidly," exclaimed a young officer but lately arrived from the military college, "tell me if you have any pretty damsel here?"

The eye of the superior shone with wrathful glare at the speaker, and then a bitter smile passed across his features.

"Fear not," he replied, "for this night's entertainment will be better than any you shall hereafter enjoy; but Heaven forbid we should harbor such beings as you allude to!"

"A truce with raillery," said La Ville, the leader; "let us taste the wine; nothing so much promotes good-fellowship' But, good father," he continued, as he filled a goblet with the sparkling wine, "you must pledge me in a bumper, so fill your glass."

"The rules of our order forbid us to indulge in wine," answered the Abbot, "and therefore you must excuse me or my brethren from tasting of the ruby produce of the wine."

La Ville smiled ironically.

He raised the goblet to his lips, but placed it again untasted on the board.

"Suspicion strikes me," cried La Ville, sternly; "and if my surmise prove correct, this shall be the last exploit you will enact."

As the speaker thus addressed his auditors every eye was riveted on the superior, whose countenance afforded no credit to the Colonel's surmise.

"Drink of the wine first," continued La Ville, "you and your brethen, and then we will follow your example."

The Abbot raised his eyes to heaven, and seemed for a moment buried in meditation; then taking the proffered cup, swallowed the contents.

The entire confraternity also drank the potion.

"Now are you satisfied?" he inquired—"now are your ungenerous doubts resolved?"

"Yes" repried the French "and here we pledge to you, good fathers."

Cup succeeded cup, as the elated soldiers, delighted with their superior entertainment, sought to take advantage of their present favorable quarters.

"Believe me," stammered out a [illegible] lieutenant, "we will ever prove grateful for the kindness we have experienced."

"When our royal eagle waves over the entire land," cried La Ville, "the brethren of this monastery shall be amply rewarded for their hospitality, and——"

"Stop you kind communications," interrupted the Abbot. "That day you shall never behold. Base tools of violence, hear me, and shudder at my words. Know that the wine we drank was poisoned! Start not. Our country claimed a sacrifice, and willingly we did our duty; and though the pangs of death are fast approaching, yet the thought that you, our enemies, must die with us is balsam to the tortured body. Does not venom even now rankle in your veins? Speak, slaves, speak!"

Consternation seized the French as they listened to the dreadful declaration, and even then the agonizing throbs declared how true was the assertion.

Madly they rushed on their betrayers, but death was already enacting his part, the swords fell from their palsied hands.

The morning came, and of the many who had entered on the previous evening into the monastery not one remained to quit its gloomy precincts.

ORIGIN OF TRAMPS.—Tramps are traced back by a contemporary to the Wars of the Rose, after which England was full of the wandering men, who had no occupation, and could give no account of themselves. They were the disbanded retainers of the great nobles whom Henry VII. forbade to keep their monstrous military retinues. They were broken men, who no longer dared to wear the "livery" of some great man, and the badges which had once won for them both impunity and consideration. The feudal strife was over, their arms and swords were no longer needed to fight for one or the other Rose, and beyond fighting they had no profession. Others there were who had been turned out of their farms when some rich landholder made "enclosures" and threw arable lands into pastures. The feeble justices of the time could not deal with these lucklessand useless rogues. The Government, confounding severity with strength, passed the cruel repressive law against which Sir Thomas Moore protested in the introduction to the "Utopia." It was not till the Spanish wars and the new discovered land in America that the nuisance partly ceased.

NEARLY everybody has heard the story of the painter of olden times who exposed his picture to the public criticism, and put a paint brush handy that anybody might paint out any particular feature he did not approve. Of course the stupid man soon found that everbody had some fault to find, and his picture was totally obliterated. Just as it was with that artist's picture, so it is with the life-work of the majority. Somebody will be pretty sure to take a crooked and distorted view of our characters and doings, however meritorious they may be. Some will do this wittingly and maliciously, others through misunderstanding.

Inflammatory Rheumatism.

A gentleman in Lynchburg, Va., ordered a Treatise of Compound Oxygen for his daughter, thirteen years of age, who had been subject to attacks of inflammatory rheumatism since her fourth year.

Five weeks after commencing the use of the treatment, he wrote:

"LYNCHBURG, Va., February 28th, 1884.

"DRS. STARKEY & PALEN.—Dear Sirs:—My daughter has been using your Compound Oxygen for five weeks. Within a week, she began to show signs of improvement; since then her recovery has been remarkable. I have never seen anything to equal it. The action of the heart is quiet and soft; there has been no sign of rheumatism; she sleeps sweetly all night; has a fine appetite has gained many pounds of flesh, and has considerable color; can walk all about the house, and has paid two or three visits in the neighborhood.

"Very respectfully, C. V. WISPERE."

A "Treatise on Compound Oxygen," containing a history of the discovery and mode of action of this remarkable curative agent, and a large record of surprising cures in Consumption, Catarrh, Neuralgia, Bronchitis, Asthma, etc., and a wide range of chronic diseases, sent free. Address, DRS. STARKEY & PALEN, 1529 Arch St., Philadelphia.

THE BABY'S PICTURE.

ONEY came at ten A. M.—the baby, his grandmother, his papa, and mamma, and two aunties. They wanted to have his picture taken. The obliging artist got everything in readiness, brought out the little velvet-lined high chair in which the babies are usually photographed, and then the trouble began.

The baby's papa wanted to take off its sack because it had such pretty fat arms, but its ma was afraid it might take cold. Then one auntie thought it would be so sweet to take off his little stockings and set him in a big arm-chair, but his other auntie thought that such a performance would not be well, and a conflict seemed imminent. Finally, it was agreed that they should take the artist's advice and strap him up in the high chair.

After much ringing of bells the baby was induced to look with favor on the new state of affairs. The artist prepared to take the negative, but just at the critical moment the infant doubled himself across the strap and screamed lustily. His papa jingled the bells anew, the artist set the music box going, while his mamma drew him out his chair, and his auntie called him a "putzy [illegible] song."

Peace being restored another negative was taken, this time with tolerable success. But one auntie did not like the expression of his face, and his mamma thought it did not do justice to his eyes.

The next time, he stuck both fists into his mouth and shut one eye; and the next time his grandma who had been watching him intently, ran hastily forward and began shaking him and slapping him on the back.

It was twelve o'clock and the thermometer stood 85 degrees in the shade, and the artist ground his teeth and looked to see how far it was to the sidewalk. Three or four more unsatisfactory attempts were made, and at last the baby, who had been taken out of the chair, slipped down on the floor with a thump.

A grand hubbub followed; everybody screamed, the third auntie fainted, and the papa yelled, while the trembling artist, fearing for his life, secreted himself behind a screen in the corner, until he was sure no bones were broken, and then he came forth, saying that he had been suddenly called downstairs to see a man.

He was so much relieved on being told that they would not try again that day, that he forgot to live up to his rules and demand "pay when the negative is taken."

As they started down the stairs the head of the family informed him that they would call again in a few days, and he has hired a small boy to sit at the foot of the steps and bring him word of their approach, so that he may have time to lock the door and hang out a notice, "Gone to the country."

"Bobby," said his mother, "there are two pieces of cake in the closet, one for you and one for Gracie. The one on the lower shelf is for you." Bobby spoke for the closet, and presently returned. "You said that the piece on the upper shelf was for——didn't you?" he asked of his mother. "No," she replied, "that is Gracie's. The piece on the lower shelf is yours." "Well, I'm very sorry mamma; but I ate Gracie's. But I'll tell you what I'll do——" and a generous light shone in the dear little boy's eyes—"as soon as Gracie comes home I'll give her a part of mine.

SPEECH of one's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen.

TWO NOTED MINSTRELS,

Who Have Won Fortunes and What They Say About Stage Life.

From Stage Whispers.

"Billy" Emerson has recently made a phenomenal success in Australia, and is rich.

Emerson was born at Belfast in 1846. He began his career with Joe Sweeney's minstrels in Washington in 1867. Later on he jumped into prominence in connection with Newcomb's minstrels with whom he visited Germany. He visited Australia in 1874 and on his return to America joined Haverly's minstrels in San Francisco at $500 a week and expenses. With this troupe he played before her majesty, the queen, the Prince of Wales, and royalty generally. After this trip he leased the Standard theatre, San Francisco, where for three years he did the largest business ever known to minstrelsy. In April last he went to Australia again, where he has "beaten the record."

"Billy" is a very handsome fellow, an excellent singer, dances gracefully, and is a true humorist.

"Yes, sir, I have traveled all over the world, have met all sorts of people, come in contact with all sorts of customs, and had all sorts of experiences. One must have a constitution like a locomotive to stand it."

"You, I know I seem to bear it like a major and I do, but I tell you candidly that with the perpetual change of diet, water and climate, if I had not maintained my vigor with regular use of Warner's safe cure I should have gone under long ago."

George H. Primrose, whose name is known in every amusement circle of America, is even more emphatic, if possible, than "Billy" Emerson, in commendation of the same article to sporting and traveling men generally, among whom it is a great favorite.

Emerson has grown rich on the boards and so has Primrose, because they have not squandered the public's "favors."

Our Young Folks.

THE OGRE.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

THERE was nothing apparently mysterious about him, as he strode along with his fiddle-case under his arm.

To be sure, he had sandy hair and an odd short-sighted way of screwing up his eyes, but there was nothing mysterious about that.

It was only Marjory and Jack, sitting together in the window-seat at dusk, who chose to make a grand mystery of this man as he passed every evening at a certain time.

These two children had lively imaginations, I suppose, for they had a way of making up stories about everything.

There was not a nook in all their home, however dark, unconnected with some history too wonderful for me to describe shortly from the coal-cellar where reigned the King of the Gnomes, to the back attic where lovely princesses had been imprisoned, and from which adventurous knights had carried them off in balloons, times without number.

Some day you may hear more of this remarkable house, but just now I must go on telling you about the Ogre.

Jack was sure he was an Ogre for various reasons.

He was always quite alone, and never took any notice of shop-windows, or perambulators, or passers-by,—all subjects of lively interest to Jack himself.

Also Jack believed that he lived in some damp, dismal castle, unnumbered stories high, in which he kept imprisoned just as many little children as he could find wandering unprotected in the streets.

Ever since he had come to that conclusion, Jack could discover a baleful glare come into his downcast eyes whenever they fell on some small atom of a child on the pavement far beneath him; for he was very tall and broad, and bony, being, in fact, a Scotchman.

Marjory was too tender-hearted to fall in with this fiction all at once.

To be sure, the Ogre looked unhappy and rather stern; but she re-membered, on one occasion, having seen him pull himself up short in his rapid walk just to prevent it itself from walking over a little toddling child, who came in his way, which was very kind and considerate, Marjory thought.

But Jack would not see why he hadn't done that just because he didn't want to fall and hurt himself, which was much a piece that Marjory gave in, and consented to look upon him as an Ogre henceforth.

"Only rather a nice Ogre, Jack," she said.

"Not a nice Ogre at all," said Jack, with decision. "The very horridest Ogre you ever heard of; for I tell you what, Marjory"—Jack's voice sank to a solemn whisper—"I don't believe he ever speaks!"

"Why don't you?" asked Marjory, impressed, but not convinced.

"Had she ever seen him speak to any one?" he asked, aggrieved. "Wouldn't he pretty fast, if he could?"

And then Jack went on to explain, in an awful undertone, that he was a more horrid Ogre, even than that, for the rule of his dreary stronghold was absolute silence, and not one of his wretched captives was allowed to utter a sound.

This was the most dreadful punishment that the pair of chatterboxes could conceive, and they worked themselves up into a great state of indignation against the Ogre and of pity for his victims.

"Should you think, Jack, that he ever gives them anything to eat?"

"Oh, of course, only nothing nice—boiled rice once a day, perhaps, out of a big black saucepan."

Then the tea-bell rang, and the two hungry youngsters tore off to tea, with never another thought for the Ogre toiling forturn towards his lonely castle in the dusk.

* * * * * *

Some time passed, and the Ogre grew, in the course of it, into an Ogre of truly terrific dimensions.

His violin-case, it was agreed, contained only his coat, a gnarled and knotted limb torn from the nearest convenient oak—a club which no ordinary man could wield, or even lift, and which argued uncommon strength in the Ogre to be able to carry so easily every day.

This he was supposed to draw out of its case by means of a secret spring so quickly, that the dangerous weapon was ready at a moment's notice.

The next thing to be discovered was his dwelling-place.

They pictured it so often to themselves, that they could describe it minutely, and, I believe, were constantly looking out for it in their walks; for which cause they used to drag their patient old nurse long distances along the river's bank among the wharfs and great deserted warehouses, despite her remonstrances.

Once seeing the Ogre stalking along before them as they were returning home, they besought her to take them to see what became of him, but this nurse would not stand.

"I'm not a-goin' to begin follerin' of strange men about at my age, Master Jack."

So they found out the castle anywhere but in the air.

Mother was another difficulty.

She could not be persuaded to look with sufficient seriousness on the matter.

Even if our hero were an Ogre, which she doubted, what could it matter to Marjory and Jack, who need not or be afraid of any one or anything just so long as they were good and truthful and never did anything to be ashamed of.

And then mother went on with the button-holes in baby's little frock, and Marjory didn't know why she felt obliged to creep up and give her a hug.

Certainly there was never such a nice old mother as hers.

It so happened that one November afternoon the two old men were sent out on an errand, and were so much engaged in imagining the histories of the people they met, that they took a wrong turning and lost their way.

They could see no policeman to ask, and were too shy to accost any of the passers-by, who all seemed in too much of a hurry to heed the woes of these forlorn little beings sobbing by to each other's hands and feeling very miserable indeed.

"For you know Marjory, there is that Ogre, who may be waiting round a corner this very minute.'

This idea so distressed the child, that Jack had to promise they would go round no corners, but just straight on till they met father or somebody they knew.

They came to a church.

An old, quiet, building, standing there in the noisy street, with its peal of bells and chimes in the clock-tower.

Jack loved music very much, and, when the chimes rang out the third quarter over their heads, he stopped at the church-porch, and drew Marjory in after him.

"There might be a verger there," he said, "whom he would not be afraid to speak to."

Inside it was very dark and quiet, till some one began playing on the organ up in the organ-loft, where two candles lighted make a little space of light.

The music was very soft and sweet; it filled the empty aisles and lingered in the vaulted tracery of the roof, wandering among the tombs and pillars like a disembodied spirit, till the dim marble figures with folded hands seemed to smile, and the Madonna in the west window to bend more lovingly over the manger wherein lay the Christ.

Jack was not frightened now.

Still holding tightly to his sister's hand, he proceeded to scramble up the dark stairs into the loft, and then stood behind the curtain, listening with all his might.

The organist was too much occupied with his music to hear the eager patter of little feet upon the stairs; but soon he left off and began turning over the leaves of his music-book.

It was hated so long that Jack grew impatient, and drawing the curtain aside, poked his curly head, and said

"I say, do play again!"

The gent organ started and turned round—and it was the Ogre!

No other.

If Jack had tried to walk into his very jaws, he could not have succeeded better.

His eyes grew round with horror.

He was too pitiably frightened either to advance or retreat.

He could only gasp, fascinated.

The Ogre said nothing, but turned to the organ and began to play.

Not dreamy music, this time, but a stirring march with a tune to it, such as children love, and it rang out so bravely, so cheerily, that once more the boy forgot to be afraid, and when the march was over Jack had called Marjory from where she was resting on the topmost stair, and they were both standing with flushed cheeks and admiring eyes beside him.

"Why there are two of them!" said the Ogre to himself.

He was a shy man, and was quite as much afraid of them as they were of him.

Living so much alone, and used to be treated in his capacity of music-master more as a machine than a human being, he had come to shrink into himself so much as to be in danger of forgetting the bond of fellowship which bound him by virtue of their common humanity with his fellow-men.

It had been different, to be sure, in the old days in Scotland before his mother died.

Very different then in that little village among the hills, where he knew everybody and everybody knew him.

So, with much greater diffidence than might have been expected from such a fierce Ogre, he ventured to inquire how the children came there; whereupon Jack explained how they had lost their way, and had gone ever so far without meeting any one they knew, that they lived in Princes' Street, and Marjory was tired.

"Why, then," said the Ogre, "you couldn't have come to a better person, for I go home that way and you shall come with me!"

He closed the organ and blew out the lights, and, taking up his violin-case, led the way down.

Then Jack, feeling about as big a hero as his namesake who made mincemeat of all the giants he came across, boldly asked him what was in his fiddle-case.

"Only my fiddle," said the Ogre, mildly.

"Can you play it?" asked the timid Marjory, peering up into his face as they came out on the steps.

"Yes, my lairn," said he.

Which meek behavior was so reassuring to Jack, that he expressed a wish to hear that fiddle.

"So you shall, faddie some day." And the Ogre actually let him carry the fiddle, which was not heavy after all.

They were walking along now, all hand-in-hand, very good friends indeed, and presently Jack took occasion to inquire where the Ogre lived.

Some way off it appeared, and all alone.

"All alone!" echoed Marjory; "oh, how dreadful! I don't know whatever Jack and I would do without mother, and nurse, or baby!"

The Ogre shook his head sadly.

"No, he had none of these things."

"Had you ever?" went on Marjory, who already showed marked symptoms of a renowned feminine failing.

The Ogre gave a little sigh, but would not answer this question clearly.

By this time, they were getting near home, and there was mother at the window wondering what had become of those children, and nurse behind.

Jack parted very reluctantly with the fiddle-case, and Marjory electrified the Ogre by lifting up her face to be kissed.

He liked it though, you may be sure.

It was a long time since any one had required that of him.

* * * * * *

A day or two after the Ogre called on mother, and when he was gone it came out that he had asked the two children to tea.

Could anything be greater fun than to go to tea with an Ogre?

Marjory would have on her coral necklace, and Master Jack was exceedingly particular about the arrangement of his tie.

But they thought no more about their grandeur when they had actually arrived at the Ogre's and were being conducted up the stairs.

"Didn't I tell you," whispered Jack, "that it was up ever so many flights of stairs?"

"Take my hand!" gasped Marjory, out of breath, and a little frightened.

The Ogre was making the tea.

There was a plate of muffins ready to be toasted, and something like a fire to toast them at, an open piano in the place of honor, and a case of ancient books.

Altogether, there was a sufficient air of age and dust about the place to satisfy the children that things altogether were even better than they expected.

And when the muffins had been toasted and consumed, and a considerable disappearance effected in the strawberry jam, when the table had been pushed into a corner, and the three chairs were drawn close, the Ogre seemed delighted, and he poked the fire till the merry flames leaped higher, and smiled at Marjory sitting opposite, with her bright, attentive eyes and folded hands. So Jack related the story of the Ogre, much as I have told it now, and I can assure you it was a long time since that dreary place had echoed to such merry laughter as filled it, over and over again, that night.

And when the story was done, and there was a little silence, Marjory broke it by remarking that she had told Jack she didn't think he could be "such a very horrid Ogre."

Whereat the Ogre said, "Thank you, hairnie," and blinked a little.

I wonder why.

Afterwards the fiddle was produced, and Jack was spell-bound by its wonderful music, till the time came too soon for them to depart, and the Ogre was left standing on the doorstep with Marjory's "You will have us again?" still ringing in his ears, with the sound of their departing footsteps.

Very quiet it seemed when they were gone, but not so lonely as before, and more than once he laughed softly to himself as he drew his bow across the beloved violin. This was only the first of many such evenings; and now, when the Ogre goes home in the dusk after his long day's work, there is Jack holding the long suffering baby up to see him pass, and Marjory kissing her hands to him.

But they still call him the Ogre.

IN THE CRUCIBLE.

BY P. C.

IT'S just a whim of mine, Muriel; where will the harm be?"

"There is always harm in deception," began the stately, brown haired girl.

But her companion flung impulsive arms about her neck and kissed her.

"That's folly," she said, carelessly. Then after a moment's survey of the face of her cousin "I think I had best tell you all about my plan, and if your conscience troubles you after that, why, I'll think you have too much of it, that's all. I didn't mean to tell you at first, because I was afraid you would decline the invitation, and that would spoil everything. But, Allan Felton is to be one of the guests."

"Oh, Nellie."

The dark face had paled perceptibly, and the brown eyes had grown very grave. Nellie kissed the sweet lips lovingly.

"You don't care for him now, dearest?" she whispered. "The old pain has wholly died, has it not?"

Muriel returned the soft caress, while the lightest touch of scorn lay on her lips.

"Yes; the old pain has wholly died," she answered. "He is nothing to me now, Nellie, nothing but one who sought my hand when he thought I should be an heiress, and dropped out of my life as soon as he found me poor."

"I am so glad," cried Nellie, with an ecstatic hug. "Then you will go to Lady Cheston's for a month, as she asked you? Go as the heiress, and let me play at poverty for awhile. Go as the heiress and bring your old lover to your feet once more."

Muriel paused a moment, then replied—"I will see, Nellie; I will think of this whim of yours, as you rightly call it, and we will talk of it again to-morrow."

* * * * * *

"What a confounded dunce I was—and she did come in for her uncle's money, after all. I wonder if it's too late yet? I hardly think so. She cared a great deal for me three years ago."

So soliloquising, Mr. Allan Felton walked up and down the terrace, at Lady Cheston's where he also was a guest for a few weeks.

Nellie and Muriel had arrived that day, and the tall, stately girl had been pointed out to him as the heiress by Lady Cheston herself, who had really fancied she told him the truth.

"It was supposed that the old man had left his money to somebody else, but that was a mistake," she had said, before leaving him to go and welcome her guests.

"I was a dunce not to make sure before I left Fernlea," he thought, half an hour later, while waiting for the others to come down.

He looked very handsome and graceful, pacing the sunlit terrace; and yet the eyes that rested on him there filled with an untold scorn.

But Muriel quietly glided out from the great hall, and smiled as she extended her hand.

"You have not forgotten an old acquaintance, I trust, Mr. Felton?" she said, very calmly, her voice as even and clear as though her pulses had never bounded at sight of his handsome face.

"Forgotten," he repeated slowly, retaining the hand she had given him, his voice very low and tender. "I have tried to, but," softly, "it is too sweet a memory to slay or hush to sleep. I am but——"

Here a laughing voice broke in on his protestations, and Nellie came out to join them, accompanied by Lady Cheston and her tall, good-natured brother.

Later, when the two girls were alone, they looked at each other and smiled.

"I am glad you are the heiress here," Nellie said. "If I am treated well, I shall know it is for myself alone. And you are as glad as I. There was triumph in your eyes to-night while Allen Felton hung over you so tenderly. But you are sure, Muriel? You won't learn to care for him again, will you?"

Muriel kissed the sweet, girlish face, and her own hardened.

"I am sure," she answered.

* * * * * *

It was the last day of their stay at Lady Cheston's.

Somewhere in the grounds Nellie and Sydney Cheston were wandering, "sufficient unto themselves," and Allan Muriel were strolling among the shadows of trees that beside the pretty lake which their boat had rippled so many times in the past month.

The young man's face was pale and moved; Muriel's was as calm as the waters before them.

"You go to-morrow?" he asked, softly.

And she smiled as she gave her reply—"We go to-morrow."

He looked at her a moment in silence, and something stirred his heart powerfully. It was not her wealth with him now; it was her love he wished for, would have perilled his life for, as he watched her calm face, in the wavering shadows.

"May I? give me permission to follow," he breathed. "Muriel, do you not know I love you, my darling? May I not hope that Fernlea's mistress will bid me come to Fernlea for my wife?"

The girl looked serenely at the flowers in her hand, smiling still.

"Perhaps it would be well for you to ask her" she said quietly.

"I do ask you. Muriel, will you be my wife? I have loved you since——"

"You thought my nursing uncle had been repaid by the gift of his wealth," she finished composedly. "You will withdraw it when I tell you that the rumors which sent you from me in the past were true. Nellie is mistress of Fernlea. You have wasted your wooing on one who is penniless, Mr. Felton."

He paled visibly, then his face flushed, and his trembled as he held them out to her.

"I own," he said, "it was the heiress-expectant that I wooed at Fernlea—the heiress whom I wooed first here; it was unmanly, and will shame me always. But now—now I love the woman! I offer you that love, knowing how poor a thing it is, but praying you to accept it. I love you—I will love no other all my life long. Let the past go—forget it. Be my wife, and let me work for you!"

She had thought her love for him dead—slain by her scorn—a thing never to come from its shroud. But now her face paled, and her heart thrilled strangely.

She turned towards him, intending to say some cruel things; but the pallor of his face, the pleading in his eyes, her own womanhood overcame her.

With a rush of hot tears, she laid her hands in his.

"This is surely love," she whispered, softly. "Yes, my heart answers it. I will be your wife, and you shall work for me."

HAVE something for the mind to feed upon, something to look forward to and live for beside the round of daily labor or the counting of profit and loss. If you have not any talent for writing splendid works on political economy or social science, or the genius for creating a good story, or a fine poem, the next best thing—and in fact, almost as good a thing—is to possess an appreciation of these things. So have books and newspapers and talk about them at dinner time or by the evening fire.

LORD DUFFERIN has been presented by an Indian rajah with a young elephant, trained to cut books and magazines with his tusks, which are filed thin as paper knives for the purpose.

THE PATIENCE OF THE POOR.

BY HOUGHTON.

No search for him of dainty food,
  But coarsest sustenance of life—
No rest by artful quiet wooed,
  But household cries, and wants, and strife;
Affection can at best employ
  Her utmost of unhandy care;
Her prayers and tears are weak to buy
  The costly drug, the purer air.

Pity herself at such a sight
  Might lose her gentleness of mien,
And clothe her form in angry might,
  And as a wild despair be seen,
Did she not hail the lesson taught,
  By this unconscious suffering boor,
To the high sons of lore and thought—
  The sacred Patience of the Poor—

This great endurance of each ill,
  As a plain fact whose right or wrong
They question not, confiding still
  That it shall last not over long;
Willing from first to last to take
  The mysteries of our life as given,
Leaving the time-worn soul to slake
  Its thirst in an undoubted Heaven.

LETTERS AND POSTS OF OLD.

There is reference in the Book of Esther to the first postal service worthy of the name concerning which we have any definite knowledge. Jeremiah refers to some such system among the Assyrians, and it is likely that from the earliest ages kings and men of power made provision for the rapid conveyance of their messages.

In Palestine and other mountainous countries this was done by fleet footmen. Some rulers provided themselves with a corps of those who were qualified by nature and practice to become such messengers. Pliny says that excision of the spleen was performed on runners as beneficial to their wind.

There is record of those who traveled on foot from Tyre to Jerusalem, one hundred miles in twenty-four hours; and we read that some could accomplish so much as one hundred and fifty miles during the same period of time.

These professional footmen were well known in the time of Job, whose language is: "Are not my days swifter than a post (lit. runner)?"

Saul, the first Hebrew king, had an organized body of "footmen" (margin, as original, runners), in which respect he doubtless followed the usual custom of kings. Under the reading "guard" we find these runners to have been a regular corps in the armies of succeeding Hebrew monarchs. Hence the allusion of Jeremiah: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?"

Among nations richer in swift beasts, and dwelling in a less mountainous country than the Jews, the runner, doubtless from the earliest times, ran with other legs than his own. But the only word used in the Bible for such couriers, whether mounted or not, is the one of which we have spoken, and which is often translated "posts." This latter English term, coming from the Latin, originally meant the house or station whence relays of horses were obtained, and where courtiers might lodge. Such an original meaning of the word is almost lost to us, though remaining in the expression "military post."

The Persian postal system was established by Cyrus the Great during a reign continuing from 559 to 529 B. C. It was greatly improved by Darius, to whom some even ascribe its origination. Herodotus gives the credit to Xerxes. This latter monarch in the earlier years of his reign devoted himself to the thorough organization and the general improvement of his realm. He perceived that the peace and permanency of his rule would be greatly enhanced by quick communication between himself and all parts of his vast empire, that he might thus have prompt and frequent reports from every officer of his government, and be able speedily to transmit his own directions and decrees. Thus only he could have "well in hand" an empire of twenty satrapies and one hundred and twenty-seven districts, extending from India to Ethiopia.

Accordingly, he established post houses along the chief lines of travel at intervals of about fourteen miles, according to the average capacity of a horse to gallop at his best without stopping. At each of these there were maintained by state a number of couriers and several relays of horses. One of these horsemen, receiving an official document, rode at utmost speed to the next post-house, whence it was taken onward by another horse, and perhaps by a new courier.

Ballantine states that at the present day a good horseman of that country will often travel one hundred and twenty miles or more each day for ten or twelve days consecutively.

Such was the method of transmitting messages existing in the time of Xerxes and Esther, and in our day still employed by the government of Persia, and, under substantially the same form, in thinly-settled regions of Russia and other countries. This system was adopted with some improvements by the Greeks and Romans, and transmitted to the nations of Western Europe, with whom in the course of centuries it developed into the inexpressibly useful form in which it has been enjoyed by us.

But in ancient times the postal system was intended only for the monarch and those "whom he delighted to honor," and not for his people, who derived no direct benefit from it. It is true that good roads, bridges, ferries, and inns were established; that by guard houses these routes were kept free from brigands which infested the empire; and that travelers might journey upon these highways; but it does not appear that they could obtain the use of the post-horses, even when the government was in need of them. And above all, the post itself was only for the king. It soon became a law of the system that a courier might impress man or beast into his service, and it was considered a serious offence to resist such impressment.

This system of couriers was subsequently, as is well known, a part of the Roman system, reference to which is found in the familiar instruction in Matthew, etc.: "Whosoever shall *compel* thee to go a mile, go with him twain." The messages of the king were thus "hastened and pressed on" at any inconvenience to the people; but common men must send their letters by caravans, by special messengers, or in any way they might.

Grains of Gold.

Without a rich heart wealth is an ugly beggar.

Let us respect gray hairs; but above all, our own.

A holy act strengthens the inward holiness. It is a seed of life growing into more life.

A man's best help is himself, his own heart, his resolute purpose—it cannot be done by proxy.

I know by myself how incomprehensible God is, seeing I cannot comprehend the parts of my own being.

Take the world's average, life in the stone mansion is very little better than life in the frame cottage.

The time for reasoning is before we have approached near enough to the forbidden fruit to look at and admire it.

It is foolish to become discouraged. The best of us all have much to fear, and the worst of all have much to hope for.

Nothing seems to be of such importance to us as our position in this life; nothing really is of such consequence as our condition in eternity.

The truth about our merit lies midway between what people say of it to us out of politeness, and what we say of it ourselves out of modesty.

To endeavor to move by the same discourse hearers who differ in age, sex, position and education, is to attempt to open all locks with the same key.

To keep on the right path patiently and perseveringly, taking success humbly, and defeat submissively is the surest way to reach the end and reap the reward.

Hard work hurts no one; it would not, perhaps, be saying too much to assert that those who have lived what are called "busy" lives have kept the vital spark longest aglow.

There are two things each of which he will seldom fail to discover who seeks for it in earnest—the knowledge of what he ought to do, and a plausible pretext to do what he likes.

It is a doubt whether the refinements of modern times have or have not been a draw-back upon our happiness, for plainness and simplicity of manners have given way to etiquette, formality and deceit.

The difference between the devil and the penitentiary is, the penitentiary works you hard, and boards you; but the devil puts you to the meanest, dirtiest jobs in the world, and makes you board yourself.

Truth is infinite, and we cannot clasp it in our finite arms; yet we may live in its light, and learn more and more of its grand meaning, if we but sincerely, honestly and patiently tread the straight road of intellectual virtue.

Nowhere can a man go that temptation cannot find him. Temptation possesses a free pass on all the railroads, a free berth on all the boats, a free entrance to all the school-rooms, and business offices, and play-grounds, and even to the churches.

Femininities.

Heliotrope is now the favorite perfume.

Pepper-pot red is the latest fantastic shade of that color.

No less than 18,061 young women are at college in this country.

Thirty American girls are teaching normal schools in the Argentine Republic.

If there be aught surpassing human deed or word, or thought, it is a mother's love.

A woman in Volusia county, Ga., is under indictment for carrying concealed deadly weapons.

The number of prisoners sentenced for life in Illinois since it became a State is 152 men and one woman.

Pompeiian paper, mottled as if with the dampness of eighteen centuries, is the newest thing in Paris stationery.

Three merry matrons, under proper escort, have just ridden in a pony phaeton from Chicago to New York.

Grapes are served on the vines in San Francisco, the bunches being tied with ribbons to match the tint of the fruit.

A neat, clean, fresh-aired, sweet and well-arranged house exercises a moral as well as a physical influence over its inmates.

We hardly think it possible that the reason they call them "giddy girls" is because they are so apt to make the young men's heads swim.

Gum-chewing is growing in favor in the West. Chicago druggists report a doubling of their sales since 1883, and the gain is steadily maintained.

When a woman goes horseback-riding she wears a silk high hat. She does that so the horse will think she is a man, and won't become frightened at her.

A woman at Adairsville, Ga., imagines herself bewitched, and thinks her mission is to find out who broke the law in Eden and took the first bite of the apple.

A lady of Boston wishes to know why some enterprising bootblack does not establish a sitting place where ladies can have their boots blacked on rainy days.

Mrs. Mackay has been giving, in London, a series of rose dinners. The whole table is made into a bed of roses, leaving just room enough around the edge for the plates.

Said an Iowa judge the other day: "But for housewives of the United States there could be no tramps, and any woman who feeds one ought to be sent to jail for thirty days."

A crazy Pennsylvania girl who talks constantly in rhyme, has been sent to an asylum. This is a very good beginning. Now, why not tackle some of the others who are still out?

The corset has again shown its usefulness as a body-guard, a young woman in Montgomery, Ala., on its account, having just escaped the plunge of a knife in the hands of her husband.

A female sheriff in Greene county, Ind., has just put up a notice to the effect that as prisoners do not care to be visited, and she has her housework to do, no visitors will be admitted to the jail under her charge.

The latest fashionable movement in England turns to trade. Lady Granville Gordon has opened a dress-making establishment, and a distinguished student of Girton has gone into the millinery business.

Continental ladies sit in their balconies and gardens for hours at work without so much as a parasol. The habit is a preventive and palliative of neuralgia, besides being a stimulant and colorative to the hair.

To 100,000 males in Montana there are only 38,875 females; in Arizona but 33,494, in Wyoming but 46,827; in New Mexico 85,533; in Dakota 64,257; in Washington Territory, 63,391. In Idaho 49,463, and in Nevada 46,185.

A Worcester county woman whose husband is a dentist, engaged a man to saw wood for her, and when the job was done told him she hadn't got any change, but the doctor would pull a tooth for him for nothing sometime.

A letter, written by a Norfolk, Va., lady, which had remained fifty years in the pocket of an old coat, was found the other day by a rag merchant, and by an equally strange coincidence reached the person to whom it had been addressed half a century ago.

"Papa, did mamma say 'yes' right off to you when you asked her to marry you?" Papa—"Certainly she did." Little girl—"Why don't she say 'yes' now just as quick when you ask her to do things?" Papa—"Mamma's hearing is not so good now, darling—that's all."

The marriage of a couple in Springfield, Mass., is said to have been deferred thirty-five years by the objection the betrothed bride had to being wedded while in mourning, deaths in her family having occurred with a regularity that prevented her from going out of mourning.

The tombstone of Mary Barker, daughter of Governor Thomas Collins, of Delaware, which stands in a private burying ground in Kent county, records the fact that her "death was occasioned by taking Peruvian bark adulterated with litharge, which was purchased of an apothecary in Wilmington."

A petition has been filed in the Fulton, Ga., Superior Court, by a woman who asks permission to change her present name, which she received with her second husband to that of her first, "who was an affectionate, true and devoted husband," while her second (now dead), she avers, made her life a burden.

"My husband is a brute!" declared Madame X. to an intimate friend the other day. "Why, my dear, what is the matter?" "He found fault with a little vivacity of mine yesterday, and I threw a candlestick at his head; then what do you suppose he did?" "I don't know." "Why, he stood before the mirror so that I couldn't throw the other. Oh, the brute!"

Masculinities.

Krupp has constructed a 120 ton gun that kills at nine miles.

No gentleman will swear before a lady—unless she is his wife.

The Rev. Thomas Thomas, of Fayetteville, Ark., is 114 years old.

A rich man's son at Harvard has spent $15,000 fitting up his college rooms.

In 1680 a liar was legally punished by having a hole bored through his tongue.

A San Jose, Cal., young man lately made his tenth unsuccessful attempt at suicide.

A Modesto, Cal., man sued another recently for knocking thirty cents out of his hand in a joke.

M. Bourdon, a chef, shot himself, in Paris, because a wedding breakfast gotten up by him was a failure.

A novel Kentucky insurance scheme is one that guarantees married men indemnity in case their wives elope.

"A crank is a man who has a capital idea with not sense enough to carry it out," says Dr. Crosby, in a new definition.

If you will notice, you will find that the man who affirms that this world is a fraud and a humbug, does what he can to make it so.

Another remarkable bit of testimony as to Edgar Allan Poe's character has turned up. He always kissed his mother-in-law before retiring for the night.

The King of the Sandwich Islands is said to be inordinately fond of mince pies. What can you expect of a man whose ancestors were brought up on missionary?

A writer has discovered that persons in captivity live a very short time. This may be a rule, but we know of some married men who have attained a remarkable age.

"Pa," said a little boy, "what is an absolute monarchy?" "I can't explain, my son, so that you can comprehend it. Wait until you get married, and then you'll know."

For ten years and more a noted fox-hunter in a Georgia county has summoned the people of his neighborhood to church by blowing silvery notes on his hunting-bugle.

Young men seeking wives will give Fargo, Dakota, the go-by when they learn that out of a population of twelve thousand there are, it is said, but four unmarried girls.

A jolly old doctor said that people who were prompt in their payments always recovered in their sickness, as they were good customers, and physicians could not afford to lose them.

Faith is sometimes personified as a drenched female clinging to a sea-washed rock, but a better personification would be a bald-headed man buying a bottle of patent hair-restorer.

"Smith, did you see my wife go down this street?" "Yes, she passed about an hour ago." "Wonder what the chances are for overtaking her?" "Good. The sidewalk is just lined with show windows."

In German the sun is feminine, while the moon is masculine, which is exactly as it ought to be, for the enjoyment of a solitary nocturnal promenade is a privilege pertaining exclusively to the masculine gender.

A bullet fired at a Los Angeles, Cal., young man, lately, was luckily prevented from reaching its intended destination by a small Bible which he carried in his pocket, the missile becoming imbedded in it.

Col. W. A. Dilks, of Nelson Point, Plumas county, Cal., committed suicide a couple of weeks ago by jumping into the crater of an extinct volcano, "which is so deep that his remains will never be recovered."

Lord Landsdowne's official reception at Winnipeg was "boycotted" by many of the residents because evening dress was insisted upon, and two entrances were provided—one for the nobles, and one for the common herd.

One of the devices used by actors to prevent smiling is to put a small wooden button in the mouth and bite it every time the impulse to laugh is felt. Some grit their teeth or cringe their toes or stick pins in themselves.

"Pawning her front teeth for drink," is one of the accusations brought against his wife by a Brooklyn petitioner for a divorce; while a policeman in the City of Churches was fined two days' pay for saying to a citizen: "You would swear the legs off an iron pot."

A gentleman, in apologizing for language used, said: "I did not mean to say what I did, but the fact is that, as you will see, I have had the misfortune to lose some of my front teeth, and words slip out of my mouth every now and then without my knowing it."

Some of the queerest names hail from the Basque provinces of Spain. Two officials in the Treasury Department at Madrid, who claim Basque descent, call themselves respectively Don Epifanio Mirurzaurzulundua y Zengotita and Don Juan Nepomuceno de Burlanagonatalorcegaceseecocha.

A polite stranger in a railway station said to an old gentleman whom he had accidentally kicked: "I beg your pardon, sir." "Eh?" said the deaf old gentleman. "I beg your pardon, sir," said the polite stranger, now slightly embarrassed. "I don't quite understand you," he said, mildly. "I beg your pardon, I kicked you." "What for?" "An accident!" roared the stranger. "An accident? Bless me—where?"

A San Francisco reporter, while passing along the street, was amazed to see through an open doorway a man in the act of driving a tenpenny nail into a wooden beam with blows of his bare hand. The blows were lusty, the nail sank visibly into the wood as each was delivered, and still the man apparently suffered no pain. The reporter approached him, and learned that he had a hand and an arm, from the elbow down, of hollow steel, the natural limb having been lost by an accident twenty years before.

The Bridal of Death.

BY R. PEYTON WARD.

EVERYBODY was astonished when Francis Clavering relinquished his splendid position in society, and retired to the country.

Young, handsome, accomplished, brilliant in conversation, and the possessor of a princely fortune, Clavering had reigned supreme in the gay world.

He resolved to leave the fascinating scenes where he had lingered too long, and seek, in the retirement of the country, that sweet happiness which the gay world could not give.

While contemplating this retreat, Clavering received a sudden and terrible blow. The lady upon whom he had lavished all the wealth of his warm and generous heart—whom he had hoped to be the partner of his joys, and the consoler of his sorrows, proved to be a mere coquette—a light, giddy creature, who changed her lovers as often as her laces. This deep and crushing disappointment drove Clavering at once to the country, to lead

"A life within itself, to breathe without mankind."

He selected a wild and picturesque spot by the side of a beautiful river, where, surrounded by all the charms of nature, he only hoped to pass his days in sweet tranquility.

In this delicious retreat, Frank Clavering entered upon a new existence.

One morning, as Clavering was taking his accustomed sail along the flowery banks of the stream, he described a beautiful bird perched on a tree a short distance from him.

Its brilliant plumage and graceful form made him desirous of securing it. He directed his boat to the shore.

The bird flew, and Clavering pursued it through a magnificent grove of oaks. Nothing daunted, our sportsman continued the pursuit. As he emerged from the grove, a delightful and unexpected scene burst upon his sight.

A beautiful garden lay stretched out before him, bathed in the soft splendor of the rising sun; butterflies and bees flitted from flower to flower; and the birds carolled their morning hymns in the trees above his head.

In the centre of the garden stood a rustic bower, almost buried beneath trailing vines. Immediately opposite the place occupied by Clavering, a small white cottage nestled amongst a wilderness of blooming roses and clustering honeysuckles.

The lower windows and door of the cottage opened upon a porch, which descended by two or three steps to a gravel walk.

While Clavering was admiring the beautiful scene spread out before him, the cottage door was opened, and a young lady came forth, attended by a graceful white hound.

Startled at the sight of a stranger, she uttered an exclamation of surprise and terror, and was on the point of returning to the cottage, when Clavering advanced to account for his unexpected presence.

With that easy elegance of manner which had been one of his greatest charms in society, he addressed her—

"Lady, I owe you many apologies for the fright which I have occasioned. While pursuing a beautiful bird I came suddenly upon this place, and have been held spellbound by all that I have seen and heard. This card will inform you that my name is Francis Clavering, a name not unknown in the great city from which I have lately removed, to take up my residence in this neighborhood."

With that innate politeness which every true woman possesses Nina Eaglemont—for this was the name of the fair lady—invited him to take a seat in the bower; and with an unaffected simplicity, perfectly fascinating to one so long accustomed to the artificial forms of fashionable life, the beautiful girl sat beside him, and they conversed with each other like intimate friends.

He soon discovered that Nina's mind was naturally remarkably fine, but sadly in need of proper training. The cause of this Clavering learnt from himself.

"My father and I have lived here five years, during which time I have seldom seen a conversable being. My father, who is passionately fond of experimental chemistry, passes his days and nights in his laboratory, surrounded by retorts, stills, and bottles filled with crimson, yellow, and green liquids, which he examines, smells, and handles with infinite care. He will not allow me to enter this *sanctum sanctorum*."

As Nina concluded, the tall but bent figure of a man appeared at the entrance of the bower. He fixed his dark, piercing eyes upon Clavering with evident surprise.

"My father—Mr. Clavering," said Nina, with evident embarrassment.

Clavering arose, and extended his hand. Mr. Eaglemont coldly bowed without touching the proffered hand, and a peculiarly disagreeable expression passed over his face.

"Am I right, Mr. Clavering, in supposing you to be a relative of Colonel Reginald Clavering?"

"I am the son of Colonel Reginald Clavering."

"I thought so from the striking likeness which you bear to him."

"You knew my father then?"

"He was once my most intimate friend," he answered, with a bitter emphasis on the last word.

The breakfast was now ready, and Nina invited Mr. Clavering to eat with them. With thanks, he declined, and departed.

Clavering had mingled in the high society of many polished cities, and had seen the women of many lands.

He had left London a wounded and disappointed man. By the faithlessness of one, his trust in all women had been shattered—almost destroyed. He saw now Nina Eaglemont, and his faith was revived, his confidence was restored; and once more he loved.

After the first accidental meeting already described, Clavering was a frequent and delighted visitor at Nina's bower.

It was his pleasant task to read to her his favorite books, while she was occupied with some elegant handiwork.

He encouraged her to make observations on what he read, and listened with pleasure to her sensible remarks.

He thus gradually introduced Nina into the garden of English literature, and taught her where to find the most beautiful flowers.

In these delightful and instructive employments were passed the bright summer mornings.

The evenings were devoted to sailing on the river, when the music of Clavering's guitar, and the sweetness of Nina's voice, lent an additional pleasure to the scene.

Oh, love! bright, young love! what bliss to be bound in thy rosy chains! How delicious! how enrapturing! how enchanting! Love beautifies everything—the evening sky seems more richly painted, the moon more silvery, and the stars seem more lustrous to the eyes of lovers.

Mr. Eaglemont had observed the constant intercourse of Clavering and Nina. From the first interview at Nina's bower he had regarded Clavering with no favorable eye.

The very mention of his name—that name which was the sweetest of all names to Nina—threw an angry frown over his countenance.

One evening Nina returned home after a moonlight sail on the river. She was completely happy.

Clavering had opened his heart to her; he had spoken of his ambitious youth, of his glorious aspirations, of his bright hopes. He told her how he had abandoned the blue-eyed goddess of wisdom to join the gay followers of the goddess of pleasure.

"For your sake, sweet Nina, I will once more enrol myself among the votaries of Minerva. I'll seek the glory of a name worthy to offer thee!" he exclaimed, his face all aglow with ardent love.

Nina entered the cottage after that blissful interview, her young heart bounding with joyful hopes of future happiness.

This evening, which had begun so auspiciously, was destined to have a sad termination.

Mr. Eaglemont met his daughter as she was passing along the wall to her chamber, and said that he wished to see her in the parlor.

Alarmed at so unusual a summons, Nina followed her father, with fear and trembling, to the apartment.

When they were seated he thus addressed her—

"Nina, I have noticed, with pain and sorrow, the daily and hourly intercourse between Francis Clavering and yourself. It must cease. Such an intimacy might lead to love; and love between the son of Reginald Clavering and the daughter of Henry Eaglemont would be strange indeed."

"Why, father, is love forbidden between the son of Clavering and the daughter of Eaglemont?"

"Do you ask me why?" he cried, his dark eyes flashing fire. "Listen to what no mortal has ever heard before, and then judge whether it is meet for an Eaglemont to wed a Clavering. Do you suppose that I always was what I am now—a poor, despised, ridiculed experimentalist? I was once the proud possessor of lordly halls, where the gay, the refined, the most distinguished men and women of the land were glad to partake of my bountiful hospitality. In an evil hour, Reginald Clavering came, recommended by his elegant manners and most fascinating address. Under the specious garb of friendship, he approached me—and I, unsuspicious, received him to my heart's embrace. Under a confiding and open manner, was concealed a heart cold, calculating, and selfish. By his insinuating arts, he became acquainted with all my family affairs. He knew the amount of my income, and I also knew that, although I was liberal in my household and other expenses, I did not use more than half of it. He determined to secure some of my superfluous money for himself. To accomplish this, he took advantage of my passionate fondness for cards. One day, while we were playing, Clavering suggested that a small stake should be named, to add to the interest of the game. I consented, and after that we always played for money. Gradually, and almost imperceptibly, a love of gaming took possession of me. At first I won nearly every game; but Clavering permitted this to induce me to play the higher sums. We sometimes played all day and night—only stopping to take our meals. In a few weeks I lost enormously; but the baneful vice had become so entwined around my heart that I found it impossible to shake it off. It is unnecessary to prolong the painful story—suffice it to say that Reginald Clavering, having won my princely fortune, also won from me my destined bride, who, proud and beautiful, was taught by Clavering to despise one whom he had made a beggar. Then it was that I swore deadly and eternal hatred to all who bore his accursed name. Can you marry the son of him who ruined your father?"

"Father, that son loves me, and I love him. Why should he suffer for his father's crimes?"

"You love this Clavering, then, better than your father?"

"I can love you both, father."

"I would rather see you lying dead at my feet than see you wed Reginald Clavering's son."

"Clavering is so kind, so gentle, so loving, father, I cannot give him up. I was an ignorant and simple girl; he came, and I learnt to love him. I am a woman now: and in my heart lies the image of Francis Clavering, never, never to be removed."

"Be it so, unhappy girl!" cried Eaglemont, rising, and stretching his right hand in a menacing manner towards her; "but cursed be the day, and cursed be the hour, that sees you the wife of a Clavering!"

And the interview ended.

The following day when Frank Clavering came as usual to Nina's bower, he found her bathed in tears.

When he inquired the cause of her weeping, she related the conversation which had taken place between her father and herself the evening before.

"I must see your father, Nina, on this subject. I will go this instant."

And leaving Nina, he proceeded to seek Eaglemont, where he was sure to find him—in his laboratory. He received Clavering with cold politeness, and demanded his business.

"I have come, sir, to ask why you object to my marrying your daughter?"

"Were I not speaking to your father's son, I would say that he was a villain! He not only robbed me of my splendid fortune but took from me the woman who had promised to be my wife. He changed the bright summer days of my youth to dark and dreary winter; he drove me from the society of my fellows, from the gay scenes where I knew no superior, to hide myself in obscurity—I, who was formed for the bright, the beautiful world. I have sworn eternal hatred to all who bear your father's name. The day my daughter becomes your wife will be an unfortunate day for both of you!"

"Suppose we are willing to take the consequences, sir?"

"Be it so, then; upon you will rest the responsibility."

Notwithstanding the threats and curses of her father, Nina and Clavering determined to carry out their engagement. The day appointed for the wedding arrived—a beautiful day in midsummer; all the preparations were completed. Two or three of Clavering's particular friends came from London. A few hours after the ceremony the bridal party were to set out on a tour of the Lakes. All the simple arrangements were perfected. A neighboring clergyman was present to perform the ceremony.

Clavering and Nina entered—she radiantly beautiful; he with a world of happiness in his manly face.

The short but impressive marriage ceremony was over, the blushing bride already had been saluted by the few persons who were present, when Nina's father approached.

A strange light gleamed in his eyes; a strange smile was on his livid lips. In each hand he held a glass, brimful of some rosy liquor.

One of these he presented to Nina; the other he handed to Clavering.

"Happy pair!" he said: "it is meet that you drink to the reconciliation of the houses of Clavering and Eaglemont."

After saying these words, he departed. They drained the glasses, and instantly fell to the floor—DEAD! Henry Eaglemont thus fearfully avenged the wrongs done him by Reginald Clavering.

The wretched man fled, and was never seen or heard of more.

BEES AND SMELLS.—A correspondent gives the following incident showing the dislike which bees have to bad perfumery. He says: "Some years ago there was in my father's garden, a plot of early potatoes, some distance in front of a spot where stood several hives. Early in the season the 'rooks' commenced to help themselves to the potatoes, grubbing the young tubers out of the ground, and doing so much mischief that some had to be shot, and the dead body of one who was impaled in the middle of the plot, as a warning and example to the rest. Soon after this a most unaccountable fury took possession of the bees. No one dared to approach them, for they attacked and instantly put to flight every person or animal which ventured into the garden. This went on for some days with most unpleasant results, and the bees were fast becoming a nuisance in the neighborhood, when the mystery was accidentally explained. Some one happening to pass by the impaled 'rook' in the evening, discovered the cause of all the mischief. Every exposed part of the poor bird's body, especially about the mouth and eyes, was literally bristling with the stings of hundreds of bees, which had sacrificed themselves in a vain and senseless revenge upon its offensive presence."

"HAS my client any right?" asked a counsellor, out of patience, of a brother wrangler at the bar. "I know not," was the response. "But one thing is certain—when you get through with him he'll have nothing left."

"PERSONAL.—Dear Ned come back; all is forgiven. Pa kicked the wrong man, and didn't know it was you. Come immediately.—May."

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Toothache	**Inflammation,**
Congestions,	**Asthma.**
Influenza,	**Sore Throat,**
Difficult Breathing.	

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Dysentery, Diarrhœa,

It will in a few moments, when taken according to directions, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Heart-burn, Sick Headache, **Summer Complaint,** Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Colic, Wind in the Bowels, and all internal pains.

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No matter by what name the complaint may be designated, whether it be scrofula, consumption, ulcers, sores, tumors, boils, erysipelas or salt rheum, diseases of the lungs, kidneys, bladder, skin, liver, stomach or bowels, either chronic or constitutional, the virus is in the BLOOD, which supplies the waste and builds and repairs these organs and wasted tissues of the system. If the blood is unhealthy the process of repair must be unsound.

THE SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT

Not only is a compensating remedy, but secures the harmonious action of each of the organs. It establishes throughout the entire system, functional harmony and supplies the blood vessels with a pure and healty current of new life.

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After a few days' use of the Sarsaparillian, becomes clear, and beautiful. Pimples, blotches, black spots and skin eruptions are removed; sores and ulcers soon cured. Persons suffering from scrofula, eruptive diseases of the eyes, mouth, ears, legs, throat and glands, that have accumulated and spread, either from unCured diseases of mercury, may rely upon a cure if the Sarsaparilla is continued a sufficient time to made its impression on the system.

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Recent Book Issues.

"The Strawbridge & Clothier Quarterly," for the present season, is more than an advertisement for its publishers. It is a compendium of fashion and household information put before the reader in attractive guise aided by copious illustrations.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The most striking feature of the *Magazine of American History* for October is General Grant's autograph letter in fac-simile, covering six pages. It was written in 1883, on the death of Alexander H. Stephens, and is now published for the first time. General Egbert L. Viele writes of the famous, Port Royal Expedition, 1861—the First Union Victory of the Civil War. Theo. R. Davis furnishes two full-page illustrations, from sketches made at the time; and an excellent portrait of the commander of the great expedition, Commodore Dupont, serves as a frontispiece to the number. Gen. "Baldy" Smith writes, The Campaign of 1861—1862, in Kentucky. The Fallacy of 1787 is a clever and suggestive paper on certain features of the Constitution, by A. W. Clason. The Homes of the Oneidas, by Rev. W. H. Beauchamp; and A Glastonbury Medal, by H. W. Richardson, are both papers of exceptional interest to the antiquarian. The shorter articles are: An Adventurous Escape from Prison Life, by Gen. J. Madison Drake; A Revolutionary Relic, by Clark Jillson; and A Critical Notice, by Henry H. Hurlbut. Published at 30 Lafayette Place, New York City.

In the October *Century* the space commonly taken up with the 'war series' has been devoted to articles and illustrations relating to the life and services of Gen. Grant. Gen. Horace Porter, contributes an anecdotal paper on, Lincoln and Grant. Gen. James H. Wilson, gives entertaining Reminiscences of Gen. Grant; and Gen. Adam Badeau writes of, The Last Days of Gen. Grant. The latter paper is illustrated with two most interesting portraits, from old daguerreotypes of Grant as lieutenant and captain. Memoranda of the Civil War, is supplied by Gen. Buell, Mrs. M. E. Seawell, Miss Heintzelman, and Chas. W. Eldridge. Riverside Park, the resting-place of Gen. Grant, is a finely illustrated paper by Wm. A. Stiles. Other illustrated articles are Lieut. Schwatka's second and concluding paper on his exploration in Alaska; Mrs. Lizzie W. Champney's description of, The Haunts of American Artists, and Mr. Howells', Tuscan Cities. The frontispiece is a portrait of the late Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield *Republican*, whose career is described by Geo. S. Merriam. Principal Grant, of Queen's University, has a timely paper on, The Canadian Pacific Railway. Zwellak: Being Notes of a Professional Exile, is an anonymous paper of clever observations on human nature. The short story of the number is by Brander Matthews, and there is a long instalment of Henry James' Bostonians. The poetry is contributed by nearly a dozen of E. C. Stedman's Twilight poets. The departments are full and interesting. The Century Co., New York.

In the October number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, Ex-president White begins a series of chapters on the Warfare of Science. His first treats of the doctrine of comets, and has an entertaining resume of the terrible superstitions which hung about them. Professor Henry Drummond propounds a new theory in regard to the white ant, which is not an ant at all, but a 'termitidæ.' He believes that the little creatures though so hated and feared snares with the earth worm the honor of being nature's great agriculturist. William Huggins describes the solar corona; Professor E. D. Cope, of this city, has an interesting paper on the Life Evolution: M. A. Daubree, in a recent number of "La Revue des Deux Mondes," makes a study of recent earthquakes. A translation of it is given in this number of the Monthly, which is more than usually valuable. Appleton & Co., New York.

The place of honor in th October *North American* is given to Cardinal Manning, who writes forcibly of the late *Pall Mall Gazette* revelations. Reminiscences seem to be the order of the day: Elihu B. Washburn tells of his acquaintance with Lincoln in Illinois; General Butler recalls the vice-presidential politics in 1864; an anonymous author discusses McClellan's change of base; Admiral Ammen relates his experience with General Grant; William W. Astor late minister of Italy, tells of the late episode of the American College of the Propaganda; General Fitz John Porter suggests how mobs may be quelled, and J. H. Eustis, Mayor Grace and Theodore Roosevelt join in symposium on the President's policy. Published at New York.

Lippincott's for October has considerable variety. E. C. Reynolds describes the minutiæ of life on a Texas sheep ranch. P. Deming tells the story of Anthony Colvert Brown. Brander Matthews discusses the theory of the short-story which, he insists, must be spelt with a hyphen. Alfred E. Lee gives an incident of Grant's journey abroad. C. F. Holder sketches the fun of turtling on the outer reef. Charles Wood describes a rough journey through Palestine. Felix L. Oswald has a chat about monkeys and Theodore Child gossips about the Parisian contourieres, or "bearded dressmaker." There are short stories by Thomas Wharton and Sophie Swett. Lippincott & Co., Publishers, Phila.

Malarial disorders as often attack the people of large cities as of the country. Ayer's Ague Cure is warranted a safe and certain specific.

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IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

A second's touch
Of hands—not much,
But listen!
A maiden sighs,
And see her eyes,
They glisten!

A thrilling dance,
A killing glance,
A capture;
A snowy glove,
The pledge of love—
O rapture!

A twilight shade,
Where plans are made,
Delightful!
A fond embrace;
A prying face—
How spiteful!

A swift good-bye,
A stifled sigh;
Conjecture;
A mother's room,
A daughter's gloom;
A lecture.

CHAPTER II.

A hurried flight,
A darksome night
That covers;
A heartfelt prayer,
Breathed by a pair
Of lovers.

A second aisle,
An angel's smile,
A marriage;
A vow for life,
A happy wife,
A carriage.

CHAPTER III.

A mother's tears,
A father's sneers;
"Forget her!"
A postman's knock,
A dreadful shock;
A letter.

A new-found son,
Two parents won
A dower!
A little cad—
Their nephew—sad
And sour.

CHAPTER IV.

A baby-boy,
Ma's precious joy,
Is sleeping;
A little girl,
Pa's precious pearl,
Is peeping.

A happy pair
Upon one chair
Conversing;
While grandpapa
And grandmamma
Are nursing!

CHAMBERS

A coat of paint has no buttons on it.

An unpopular general—General depression.

Said the monkey to the dude: "Beware of imitations!"

The sky, unlike man, is most cheerful when the driest.

My son, if anybody smokes the filthy weed, don't chew.

A convict, however poor, can always have a watch and chain.

"Is marriage declining?" asks a correspondent. No, it's generally accepting.

What word is that composed of five letters from which if you take two one remains? Stone.

"What is sweeter than to have a friend you can trust?" asked Sawkins. "To have a friend who will trust you," replied Dawkins.

The transformations of nature are wonderful. Put a herring in a tin box with some cotton-seed oil, and it immediately turns into a sardine.

Civilization is making gratifying progress in the Congo country. A few years ago the inhabitants ate white persons raw; now they roast them.

A prominent mathematician's wife has presented him with a pair of twins. He has now attained the full sum of happiness, with two to carry.

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in time. Kidney diseases may be prevented by purifying, renewing, and invigorating the blood with Ayer's Sarsaparilla. When, through debility, the action of the kidneys is perverted, these organs rob the blood of its needed constituent, albumen, which is passed off in the urine, while worn out matter, which they should carry off from the blood, is allowed to remain. By the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the kidneys are restored to proper action, and Albuminuria, or

Bright's Disease

is prevented. Ayer's Sarsaparilla also prevents inflammation of the kidneys, and other disorders of these organs. Mrs. Jas. W. Weld, Forest Hill st., Jamaica Plain, Mass., writes: "I have had a complication of diseases, but my greatest trouble has been with my kidneys. Four bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla made me feel like a new person; as well and strong as ever." W. M. McDonald, 48 Summer st., Boston, Mass., had been troubled for years with Kidney Complaint. By the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, he not only

Prevented

the disease from assuming a fatal form, but was restored to perfect health. John McLellan, cor. Bridge and Third sts., Lowell, Mass., writes: "For several years I suffered from Dyspepsia and Kidney Complaint, the latter being so severe at times that I could scarcely attend to my work. My appetite was poor, and I was much emaciated; but by using

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my appetite and digestion improved, and my health has been perfectly restored."

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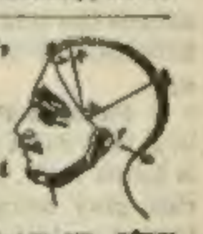

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No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
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Latest Fashion Phases.

Among the Fall fashions of course bonnets must occupy a leading place. And it is certainly a fact that the new ideas in them are both numerous and striking. One recently seen was a rich terry velvet, high-crowned poke, in a peculiar tint of copper brown, caught back from the face in a point and filled in with shaded ostrich feathers, caught by the stems and made to drop over the forehead in careless gracefulness. The strings were of satin lined velvet and fastened amid a profusion of loops and bows at the sides with fancy metal ornaments. Another was a magnificent carriage chapeau, an extremely high-crowned poke, in the new and fashionable lead color. The material is velvet, and upon one side put on in careless folds which originate at the brim and reach the top of the crown, which latter is beaded in lattice work designs in lead colored beads to match, and having pendant drops falling to the brim on the front.

A bunch of natural gray ostrich feathers adorns the sides, and a pompon and aigrette bristles over it like a cat with her back up.

A Parisian Promenade head ornament in a deep dainty turban, the crown of which is Louis XIV. blue velvet, with a brim of rich gray astrachan fur. A fancy made bird of grayish white, the head representing a seagull's and the breast and wings those of a dove, ornaments the front, with a fine aigrette standing erect over it.

One handsome carriage bonnet, with extremely tall crown, was of bronze brown velvet and ornamented with natural brown ostrich feathers, and on these a tiny brown bird, about the size of a humming bird, with outspread wings. This was lined with pink and had face trimmings also of pink.

Among the short wraps for early Fall wear was a handsome one composed of velvet finished plush in the new brown tint and having vast tab fronts of cashmere applique embroidery illuminated with gold beads. Others were in ribbed plush in black and colors, with a profusion of jet and colored bead embroidery for ornamentation.

For long paletot coats the Persian designed camel's hair cloth is employed, mostly in browns and lead colors. A rich collection of dress goods in silks, velvets, plushes and satins embraces among the novelties Touton velvets. The grounds are plain silk or velvet and the elaborate flowering is raised in tufted work. Alternate stripes of plush and moire silk are also seen upon the goods designed to drape plain silk and velvets.

For evening costumes a very rich texture of silk in frost like and delicate pink has a surface ornamentation of tinsel embroidery and bead applique designs.

Something new in woolen goods has a ground of solid color and is covered with a net work of checks in shaded tints and giving a changeable effect to the surface. The old honey comb imitations in wool goods are again revived and are also changeable in effects.

Guipure patterns are likewise outlined in surface figures. Especial mention should be made of the robe pattern dresses beaded, braided, and embroidered in fancy designs and shadings. One very handsome style was a front and broiderings of Russian lace effects in cloth. It was cut out in leaves and roses, finished with silk cords and heavily beaded.

The cuffs and vest were also of bead embroidery to correspond. These robe costumes in cashmere and light weight camel's hair are $40 each. Nine additional yards beside the front and borderings are included in the pattern. In Angora goat's hair cloths the prices range higher, making ten dollars' difference in the price of a robe costume of plain solid colors.

Among the season fringes either in black or colors, the Milan drop fringe has the preference. It is composed of silk braid, with enameled or covered wood drops depending from each end. It is very strong and will wear as long as the most durable garment upon which it is put.

Acorn fringe is also very stylish and desirable for cloaks and outside garments for dress purposes. This is made of chenille and tipped with pendants or enameled acorns, made in perfect imitation of the real oak nuts. For draping house and dinner dresses comes the new lace called Touton yak.

It is represented both in black and colors. Fronts and flounces to match are also shown in this lace. Beaded grenadine fronts are priced from $6 to $11 each. Some are hand-beaded and others done by machinery. Jet fronts are still the rage; but a later caprice is a mixture of lead and jet bead embroidery, the trimmings of the dress to be of edging to match the front. Another very stylish and jaunty ornamentation for street or carriage costumes is the hussar loops.

They are made of large twisted silk cords formed into armholes and shoulder ornaments and slipped over the arm, falling in long, graduated loops down the back amid the drapery. For plain cloth basques or princesse overdresses it is the only trimming required at the waist.

For short dolman wraps the marabout feathers and clipped ostrich trimmings are still in vogue. In a late opening in this city the leading feature was the elegant costumes from different artists in Paris and Berlin. A dinner dress of steel gray satin was garnished by front and side panels, collar and cuffs and vest and moss embroidery and illuminated bead outlines.

The embroidery was in cashmere effects and very gorgeous. A full drapery of the plain satin at the back completed this work of Parisian art. A promenade and carriage outfit was of brown cloth, cut a la princesse overdress, and worn over a petticoat of ribbed plush.

Another, of deep blue cloth plain velvet skirt, trimmed with honey comb beaded braid, was similarly made. A magnificent dinner and evening costume was composed of Louis XVI. blue velvet, combined with a paler tint of blue silk. The back drapery was of the velvet and the side of fancy striped, moss fringed velvet. The front breadth of pale blue silk was covered with full drapery of pendant beaded lace, the beads and net matching the palest tint of blue represented in the combination. Under ruffings and facings were of pink in the most delicate tint.

A handsome carriage costume of copper colored Ville Francaise was striped over the entire surface with cadet blue velvet, woven in the material, but raised in bas relief above the silk. The corsage was made demi-Fedora front and fan-plaited back and combined plain blue velvet with the copper colored frill. A gorgeous dinner dress of seal velvet was trimmed with moss embroidery in palm leaf designs on pale ecru silk ground.

A vest front, falling in points over the skirt, was of leaf passementerie, outlined by iridescent bead work. A five o'clock tea toilet of copper brown silk had the entire front covered with passementerie lattice work, hung with barrel-shaped wooden beads, painted the same shade of brown as the silk of which the costume was composed. An exquisite work of art of Worth's conception was a dark cadet blue velvet, embossed in raised jardiniere patterns, and having pointed tabs falling from the sides to the back drapery.

The entire dress was trimmed with illuminated bead embroidery and the front of pale blue ottoman silk put on in half loose drapery style. The corsage was demi girdle and the back and sleeves entirely velvet. A special line of fancy Japanese and Chinese silk underwear and bridal trousseaux were exhibited on the same floor with imported costumes. Entire sets of white, pale pink and blue Chinese silk were elaborately garnished with lace of the finest quality.

Dressing sacques and skirts were of the same dainty fabrics covered with deep flounces of lace. Pale pink Chinese silk as sheer as grass linen was used for chemises and night robes, having yokes and sleeves of needlework or escurial lace. Others were trimmed with real or imitation Valenciennes lace.

The fans which fashionable hands will wave the coming opera and ball seasons are both marvelous and gaudy. The very latest importations in fans are of ostrich and marabout feathers, oblong in shape and not made to close at all. In the centre are bright plumaged birds nestled. Handles are tortoise and amber and perfectly plain. All the attention is attracted to the tops. They look altogether too dainty for use, and in beauty and frailty eclipse anything in breeze raisers on record.

Something entirely new in less expensive fans are made by drawing different colored ribbons through sections of olive wood sticks. Thus the entire cover is made of ribbon. By a spring attached to the frame each section can be separated and the ribbons changed at pleasure.

Domestic Economy.

NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.—[CONCLUDED FROM LAST WEEK.]

Amongst fancy pincushions may be mentioned those pretty but at the same time rather useless trifles manufactured from acorn cups, husks of beech nuts, walnut shells, and various sea shells. The acorn and beech cups should be chosen, if possible, where there are two on the same stalk, well cleaned inside and out and varnished if preferred. A small circle of satin must be cut, and about a teaspoonful of bran or emery powder laid in the centre of it.

A stout piece of thread must then be tied round the satin near the edge, so as to keep the bran in, and to form, as it were a little bag full of bran. Any loose edges of satin must be cut off as close as can be without disturbing the thread, so that it will fit easily into its receptacle, in which it must be fastened by means of glue or cement. If walnut shells are to be made use of in this manner, they must be gilded first with gold paint.

Indeed, I have seen the acorn cups and beech nut husks also covered with gilding. The sea shells are managed in the same way, but are, of course, not to be gilded. There are innumerable small baskets very daintily woven to be had very inexpensively just now, which, when trimmed up in various ways, can have a small satin pincushion fastened into them very successfully.

The baskets many be gilded, painted with a color, or simply edged with a miniature ball fringe.

Those that are made with a lid are by no means unsuitable for this purpose, as the lid may be fixed upright by means of a stitch at the back, and this makes it very convenient for them to be hung to the handle of a looking-glass. These baskets may also be filled with loops of wool to serve as a hairpin cushion, and may be made to match the pincushions, and then sold in pairs.

The loops of wool are made thus: Cast on and knit a row of plain knitting, then in the next row wind the wool twice round the first and second finger of the left hand, knit the stitch, taking in the loops with it, and do this all along the row. The next row is plain, and so the two are worked alternately until a piece is made of the right size to fill the basket.

The smallest size of the penny Japanese fan is now used for pincushions instead of wall pockets, and are trimmed up in much the same way, the only difference being that the lower end where the pocket was made is now stuffed out to serve as a pincushion.

Small shoes cut out in cardboard and covered with satin may have a pincushion fastened into their toes, and are very elegant little trifles. Some that I have seen are nearly as large as real ones, and so lend themselves admirably to embroidery on the toes and on the upper part. They must have a cord sewn on all around them as a finish. Long narrow pincushions like tiny satin bolsters are popular.

They should be about eight inches in length, about eight inches in length, and about five inches in circumference. Coarse flannel, like house flannel, serves admirably as a stuffing for these, as a roll of it may be very easily made first, and the outside cover slipped over it.

The ends should be neatly drawn together and fastened off with a pair of small tassels at each side, while a loop of fine cord may be fastened at either end, and so serve as a handle. A modification of this pincushion is the cracker shape, which is on the same principle, except that it is not so large, and that before the two ends of satin are gathered up, a full of lace is added to represent the laced ends of the cracker. A tie of ribbon hides the join of the lace and satin.

The Siamese pincushion is a novelty. It really consists of two small square pincushions united at one of their corners by a loop of ribbon like the centre of a bow. A similar way of arranging twin pincushions is to lay one square one cornerwise on the top of another, like a pouf ottoman. The one should have tassels at each corner, and they are prettiest in effect when made of plush of two contrasting colors.

Very handy little harlequin pincushions are made of satin exactly on the plan of children's knitted balls, perfectly circular, and the more colors that are used, the prettier they look. The pieces of satin are cut a long diamond shape, and carefully stitched together, leaving only one seam open, through which the stuffing can be pushed in.

They must be crammed as tightly as possible with wool, or whatever is used for the inside, and then this one seam sewn up. Rolling the ball about in the hands after it has been finished will restore the circular shape, if it has been at all disturbed during the process of filling.

Triangular pieces of silk or satin may be sewn together in the same way to make a cushion in the form of a jockey's cap, and when finished, they require to be sewn to a cardboard covered with black silk, that is exactly the shape of the under part of a cap, only flat, instead of hollow as in a real one.

The card must be a circle with a small peak projecting in front. It will be found very inconvenient to cover the peak with the black silk, so this must be painted with black paint after the satin has been sewn to the cardboard.

Miniature tea cosies and hassocks can be made in the same way, and a full description of these will surely be superfluous to anyone who has followed the directions already given for making other shapes.

Lastly, I will mention a very favorite and yet simple style of cushion. An oblong bag of almost any material is made, measuring about five inches in length and six inches in circumference. This is partly filled with bran to within two inches of the top. A narrow ribbon is then tied tightly round it to keep the bran in, and to make it firm enough to take the pins comfortably. This is all; so it will be seen how easy they are to make.

In an hour, at least, half a dozen may be made, especially if a sewing-machine is at hand to stitch the sides of the bag, and these will form an acceptable contribution to any bazaar stall.

Confidential Correspondents.

A. L. B.—All right.

G. A. RATE.—The difference is not too much.

B. V.—If a lady has three or four lovers, and does not know which of them to choose, she should not make any choice at all.

OSCAR.—A phlegmatic person is one of a matter-of-fact mind, curt in speech, precise in manner, and imperturbable in disposition.

ALICE.—You had better get a chemist to give you something very bitter and unpleasant to the taste, but quite harmless, to rub on your nails. You will soon leave off biting them then.

B. S. M.—The best course is to go to see the young lady as quickly as possible, and woo her with all possible earnestness: otherwise she may become reconciled to her beau, and you will lose her.

ANXIOUS.—If the plan you have adopted, of reading some work aloud and deliberately for an hour or two at a time, has not cured you of lisping we are totally unable to suggest any other remedy.

VIOLET.—A courtship of three or four months is generally sufficient to enable a person to study another's temper and disposition sufficiently to enable him to judge whether they would be happy together.

PARKER.—A purser is the ship's storekeeper, book-keeper and commissary general. The pay is varied according to the steamship companies. It takes plenty of experience and ability to fill such a position.

L. B. G.—You can only wait. You may meet some one whom you love well enough to marry. If your beau has energy and ability, he may succeed in the West, and return to you. Do not build any hopes, however, upon this.

CUPID.—It is not legal for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister—in fact, it is no marriage at all, and the children are illegitimate. The meaning of the name Edward, Saxon in its origin, is "happy keeper;" that of Thomas (Hebrew) is "a twin."

L. F.—It is discretionary with magistrates and ministers whether or not they unite in marriage properly qualified persons who request their services, but it is clearly their duty to perform the service where there is no solid objection to the union of the parties applying.

E. B.—You should make no advances to a young gentleman of whose regard for yourself you are uncertain, how well soever you may like him. You will only forfeit your own self-respect and his esteem. If he wishes to visit you, he will do so; if he does not, let him stay way.

TOTTIE.—1. You must use your own discretion in the matter, but after what has taken place we should advise you to be very cautious in the future. 2. Wash it very frequently, and put a little—very little—soda in the water. 3. Belinda means "fair to look upon." 4. Hair "auburn."

G. A.—You must be a vain, heartless, dishonorable young man, according to your own story about your "two sweethearts," and the course you have pursued and wish to pursue concerning them. No wonder that the father of one of them does not wish his daughter to have anything to say for you.

POLLY.—The writing may be improved. You say that you think a young gentleman likes you, but he has never told you so; and you ask how you are to behave towards him. You must behave just as if you did not notice anything particular on his part, until he avows his love and explains his intentions.

X. Y. Z.—There is nothing to do in a case where a young lady, suddenly, and without cause, returns a young gentleman's presents and breaks off the engagement. But if he be aware of having given some cause of offence, it may materially alter the case, and should then volunteer an explanation and an apology.

POET.—The Pierides have reference to the nine muses. Nine daughters of Pierus, of Thessaly, presumed to rival the Muses in song, and the latter promptly changed the audacious maids into magpies and mounted their names on the same principle that Minerva caused herself to be styled "Pallas" after having slain the giant of that name.

HECTOR.—As a general thing, where a young gentleman is invited to visit a family by the head thereof, and becomes attached to a daughter of the house, it is not indispensable that he should ask permission to visit her until he has made up his mind to win her for his wife. Then it would be not only proper, but discreet, for him to have his purpose sanctioned by her parents.

E. L. B.—The "Epact" is the excess of the solar month over the lunar month. If found to be over 30, that number is deducted. The "Heliacal, or Solar Cycle," is the regular period between the years at which the day of the month falls on the same day of the week. This happens at intervals of 6, 11, 5, and 5 years, owing to Leap-Year, but the regular period is 28 years. This (1885) is the 15th year of the Solar Cycle.

A. L.—At the time of full moon nearest to the autumnal equinox it happens that the moon rises for several days nearly at sunset, and, consequently, at about the same time evening after evening, instead of beginning its ascent 52 minutes later on one day than on the preceding. The phenomenon is owing to the fact that just at this time the moon is in Aries, when that part of the ecliptic below the horizon makes the smallest angle with it.

DANKS.—The "Juggernaut" is an idol formed of a pyramidical black stone, with two rich diamonds to represent eyes; the nose and mouth are painted vermilion. The number of pilgrims that visit the god is stated to be more than a million annually. Formerly some were crushed by the wheels of the car, and to the distance of fifty miles the way was strewn with human bones. The temple of Juggernaut has existed about 800 years.

E. L. G.—The term relievo signifies the representation of any object projecting or standing forth from the plane on, and commonly out of, which it is formed. Of relievos there are three kinds—basso, mezzo and alto: the first is, when the projection is less than one-half of the natural thickness, such as is seen on coins or medals; the second, when one-half of the figure emerges; the third, when the figure is so completely salient that it adheres to the plane only by the narrow strip.